

## Merck to acquire Idenix for \$3.85 billion

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**Singapore:** Global pharmaceutical company, Merck, is in process to acquire Idenix Pharmaceuticals, a biopharmaceutical company engaged in the discovery and development of medicines for the treatment of human viral diseases, at \$3.85 billion.

Idenix's primary focus is on the development of next-generation oral antiviral therapeutics to treat hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection. The company currently has three HCV drug candidates in clinical development: two nucleotide prodrugs (IDX21437 and IDX21459) and a NS5A inhibitor (samatasvir). These novel candidates are being evaluated for their potential inclusion in the development of all oral, pan-genotypic fixed-dose combination regimens.

"Idenix has established a promising portfolio of hepatitis C candidates based on its expertise in nucleoside/nucleotide chemistry and prodrug technologies," said Dr Roger Perlmutter, president, Merck Research Laboratories. "Idenix's investigational hepatitis C candidates complement our promising therapies in development and will help advance our work to develop a highly effective, once-daily, all oral, ribavirin-free, pan-genotypic regimen that has a duration of treatment as short as possible for millions of patients in need around the world," he added.

"Merck has established a strong legacy of leadership and innovation in treating hepatitis C," said Mr Ron Renaud, Idenix's President and Chief Executive Officer. "This agreement creates shareholder value by positioning Idenix's strong portfolio of candidates for future success with a leading healthcare company with the experience and commitment to develop fixed-dosed combinations with the potential to impact the global burden of hepatitis C."