

## Taiwan pharma firm gets US patent for glucose drug

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**Singapore:** Taiwan-based TWi Pharmaceuticals has received US patent allowance for its metformin controlled release formulation, which is used to control blood glucose levels of type 2 diabetic patients.

The granted patent (US patent number 8,486,453) claims to cover the controlled-release composition of TWi's metformin product with reduced food effect. The patent is part of TWi Pharmaceuticals' broad intellectual property portfolio for building a franchise for treating type II diabetes and other metabolic diseases.

Dr Calvin C Chen, president, TWi Pharmaceuticals, said that, "We are very pleased with the issuance of this patent in the US for our oral, controlled-release metformin formulation. Metformin is the most prescribed oral drug to control blood glucose levels of type 2 diabetic patients. Due to its bioavailability is highly influenced by food intake, currently available controlled-release metformin formulations need to be taken with food that is inconvenient to patients."

"In addition, compliance of metformin products for diabetic patients, who usually have multiple illnesses and need to take several medicines daily, has sometime been poor because metformin administration time is always different than other medications," Dr Chen added.

TWi's proprietary formulation is to improve patient compliance and blood glucose control since this formulation has clinically proved to significantly reduce the variance of metformin concentration in blood when taken with or without food. TWi intends to build a franchise of diabetes therapy with this new metformin formulation as standalone therapy or in combination with TWi's own diabetes drug AC-201 or other metabolic disease drugs on the market. According to IMS Health, a market research firm, the total annual sales of the metformin products in US were approximately \$2.1 billion in 2012.