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Japanese pharmaceutical giant Eisai Co. Ltd. and Nihon Medi-Physics Co. Ltd. have entered into a collaboration agreement to contribute to the diagnosis and treatment of Dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB) in Japan. Nihon Medi-Physics Co., Ltd. (NMP) is a joint venture of Sumitomo Chemical Company Limited and GE Healthcare (United Kingdom), a leading manufacturer of radiopharmaceuticals.

NMP has been working on development, manufacture and supply of high-quality radiopharmaceuticals used in diagnostic nuclear medicine valuable for disease diagnosis, and is determined to continue contribution to further improvement of medical care in Japan.

Based on the agreement, both companies will share information with each other on dementia including DLB, and work to generate new evidence as well as hold study meetings in order to improve the diagnosis and treatment of DLB. Through this collaboration, Eisai and Nihon Medi-Physics will contribute to the diagnosis and treatment of DLB in order to further contribute to addressing the diverse needs of, and providing increased benefits to patients with DLB, and their families.

It has been indicated that DLB is difficult to diagnose, because the disease presents characteristic symptoms such as cognitive fluctuations, visual hallucinations and parkinsonism in addition to progressive cognitive impairment.

Nihon Medi-Physics markets the brain disorder diagnostic agent DaTSCAN Injectable (ioflupane [123I], DaTSCAN), which is claimed to be the only product indicated for the use of dopamine transporter scintigraphy in diagnosing DLB in Japan. DaTSCAN is a radiopharmaceutical for use in Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography (SPECT) imaging.

On the other hand, Eisai markets Aricept (donepezil hydrochloride), which is said to be the world's only treatment approved for the suppression of progression of dementia symptoms in DLB in Japan. Eisai has a wealth of experience and knowledge gained from more than 30 years of drug discovery in the field of dementia and information provision activities for Aricept.