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Singapore: Bionomics, a biopharmaceutical company, has filed a patent application for BNC105 in combination with immune checkpoint inhibitors for the treatment of cancer.

The new patent is based on important preclinical findings regarding the synergistic effects in preclinical models of a combination of the company's proprietary novel oncology compound BNC105 and antibodies against known immuno-oncology targets.

"We are very happy to announce the results of these preclinical studies which suggest that BNC105 may be effectively combined with immune-oncology approaches for the treatment of solid tumours," said Ms Deborah Rathjen, chief executive officer and managing director, Bionomics. "We have filed an additional patent application in order to further strengthen the intellectual property surrounding BNC105 and enhance both its development and licensing potential. BNC105 has demonstrated that it can be safely combined across a number of treatment modalities and solid tumour types".

Immune checkpoints are "immunological brakes" used by healthy cells to avoid over-activation of the immune system. Tumour cells often take advantage of these checkpoints to escape detection by the immune system. CTLA-4 and PD-1 are checkpoints that have been studied as targets for cancer therapy. Inhibiting a checkpoint (ie, "releasing the brakes") on the immune system may enhance the ability of the immune system to attack and kill tumours. This class of therapy has shown significant success in recent clinical trials with several of such drugs gaining approval in a number of cancer settings.