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Bracco expands BubbleGen cell selection platform with CD3+ T-cell isolation kit

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The microbubble-based kit offers a magnetic bead-free approach to T-cell isolation for CAR-T, TCR-T and broader cell therapy process development.

Bracco Imaging has expanded its BubbleGen cell selection portfolio with the launch of the BubbleGen CD3+ T Cell Selection Kit, a microbubble-based solution designed to support cell therapy research and manufacturing workflows without the use of magnetic beads.

The launch marks the first expansion of the BubbleGen platform following the introduction of its early access programme in May 2026.

Cell selection is a critical step in cell therapy manufacturing, particularly for programmes involving CAR-T and TCR-T therapies.

Bracco said conventional magnetic bead-based workflows can add complexity, time and cost to manufacturing, particularly as developers look to scale production.

BubbleGen was developed as a non-magnetic alternative using antibody-targeted lipid microbubbles to selectively bind desired cell populations.

Following separation, the microbubbles naturally dissipate, leaving selected cells free of magnetic particles.

The approach is intended to reduce concerns associated with bead detachment, magnetic residuals and potential cell loss during column-based processing.

The new CD3+ T Cell Selection Kit is designed as a scalable, ready-to-use solution for T-cell isolation.

It supports applications including T-cell isolation and depletion, CAR-T and TCR-T development, and broader T-cell process development workflows.

Bracco said the platform is designed to provide flexibility as cell therapy targets and manufacturing requirements continue to evolve.

“Cell therapy manufacturing requires technologies that can scale with the growing demands of the industry while reducing complexity and cost,” said Sophie He, Vice President of Cell Therapy at Bracco Imaging.

“The expansion of the BubbleGen portfolio reflects Bracco’s commitment to advancing practical solutions for cell therapy developers as they move toward GMP manufacturing.”

She added that the ready-to-use CD3+ kit is intended to support current process-development needs while establishing a foundation for future cell therapy applications.

Thierry Bettinger, R&D Director at the Bracco Research Center Geneva, said cell therapy developers are facing growing pressure to streamline workflows while maintaining cell quality and consistency.

“BubbleGen provides researchers with a magnetic bead-free approach that combines workflow simplicity with the flexibility needed to support emerging cell therapy applications,” he said.

The BubbleGen platform is compatible with downstream applications including phenotypic characterisation, gene editing, gene expression analysis and functional testing.

By removing magnetic particles from the final selected cell population, Bracco is positioning the technology as a potentially simpler approach for researchers seeking to integrate cell selection into increasingly complex manufacturing processes.

The company also sees the platform as relevant to improving the scalability and cost-efficiency of CAR-T manufacturing as the sector moves towards broader commercialisation.

The BubbleGen CD3+ T Cell Selection Kit is currently available for research use.

Bracco is also inviting researchers to participate in evaluation programmes for future BubbleGen applications as it expands the platform to additional cell populations and workflows.

The launch reflects growing innovation in upstream cell therapy manufacturing, where developers are increasingly focused not only on therapeutic design but also on simplifying and standardising the processes required to isolate, engineer and expand cells at scale.