

Press release

Singapore

*Sanofi, A*STAR and the National Skin Centre partner to advance research in the treatment of acne*

Singapore, November 22, 2024 – Sanofi, the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), and the National Skin Centre Singapore (NSC) established a Memorandum of Understanding to advance research in acne treatment. Facilitated by the Biomedical Sciences Industry Partnership Office, a national platform hosted by A*STAR, this partnership draws on the expertise of Sanofi alongside clinical and research institutions from Singapore. Together, they combine advanced scientific knowledge and state-of-the-art biomedical and clinical infrastructure to drive advancements in acne treatment. This collaboration will encompass a phase 1 clinical study in patients with mild acne, anticipated to start in Q2 2025, and a translational study to build a deeper understanding of the key biological markers that impact the severity of the condition.

Jean-François Toussaint

Global Head of Research and Development, Vaccines, Sanofi

“Acne impacts millions globally and Singapore is renowned for its exceptional research infrastructure and expertise in skin science. Our collaboration with leading institutions here offers the ideal environment to extend the research on our acne vaccine candidate program, including in earlier disease stages. As a leader in immunoscience, we are pioneering groundbreaking approaches in acne treatment aimed at restoring a balanced microbiome through the power of the immune system.”

Acne is a widespread, chronic inflammatory skin condition that impacts quality of life, self-esteem and mental health of both teens and adults.¹ While nearly 80% of teens experienced acne,² treatments have seen little advancement in the past 30 years.³ Adult acne is also becoming more common, affecting an estimated 40% of the population.^{4,5}

Associate Professor Chua Sze Hon

Executive Director, National Skin Centre, National Healthcare Group (NHG)

“NHG is excited about our collaboration with Sanofi through our National Skin Centre to explore a new approach and treatment against acne. The clinical study will help to generate valuable data to establish new efficacy endpoints for mild acne treatment, which are currently unavailable, and reinforce Singapore’s expertise in clinical trials, particularly in an Asian context. The translational study will explore the role of skin bacteria and biological responses in acne progression, paving the way for targeted biologics in future acne treatments.”

¹ Morshed, A.S.M., Noor, T., Uddin Ahmed, M.A. et al. Understanding the impact of acne vulgaris and associated psychological distress on self-esteem and quality of life via regression modeling with CADI, DLQI, and WHOQoL. *Sci Rep* 13, 21084 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-48182-6>

² Szepietowska M, Bień B, Krajewski PK, Stefaniak AA, Matusiak Ł. Prevalence, Intensity and Psychosocial Burden of Acne Itch: Two Different Cohorts Study. *J Clin Med*. 2023 Jun 12;12(12):3997. doi: 10.3390/jcm12123997. PMID: 37373690; PMCID: PMC10299123.

³ Layton AM, Thiboutot D, Tan J. Reviewing the global burden of acne: how could we improve care to reduce the burden? *Br J Dermatol*. 2021 Feb;184(2):219-225. doi: 10.1111/bjd.19477. Epub 2020 Sep 24. PMID: 32770673.

⁴ Dreno B. Recent data on epidemiology of acne. *Ann. Dermatol. Venereol*. 2010;137((Suppl. 2)):S49-S51. doi: 10.1016/S0151-9638(10)70045-4. [DOI] [PubMed] [Google Scholar]

⁵ Rzany B., Kahl C. Epidemiology of acne vulgaris. *J. Dtsch. Dermatol. Ges*. 2006;4:8-9. doi: 10.1111/j.1610-0387.2005.05876.x. [DOI] [PubMed] [Google Scholar]



Professor Tan Sze Wee

Assistant Chief Executive, Biomedical Research Council (BMRC), A*STAR

"A*STAR is delighted to collaborate with Sanofi and the National Healthcare Group through its National Skin Centre (NSC) to push the boundaries of research in acne treatment. This partnership illustrates the power of collaboration, bringing together A*STAR's expertise in microbiome science, advanced analytics, and machine learning with the clinical strengths of Sanofi and NSC. Together, we aim to advance research in Singapore and contribute meaningfully to innovative and breakthrough solutions for acne sufferers worldwide."

This collaboration has the potential to reshape the acne treatment landscape, offering innovative solutions that could transform the quality of life of people living with acne.

About Sanofi

We are an innovative global healthcare company, driven by one purpose: we chase the miracles of science to improve people's lives. Our team, across the world, is dedicated to transforming the practice of medicine by working to turn the impossible into the possible. We provide potentially life-changing treatment options and life-saving vaccine protection to millions of people globally, while putting sustainability and social responsibility at the centre of our ambitions.

About the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) is Singapore's lead public sector R&D agency. Through open innovation, we collaborate with our partners in both the public and private sectors to benefit the economy and society. As a Science and Technology Organisation, A*STAR bridges the gap between academia and industry. Our research creates economic growth and jobs for Singapore, and enhances lives by improving societal outcomes in healthcare, urban living, and sustainability. A*STAR plays a key role in nurturing scientific talent and leaders for the wider research community and industry. A*STAR's R&D activities span biomedical sciences to physical sciences and engineering, with research entities primarily located in Biopolis and Fusionopolis. For ongoing news, visit www.a-star.edu.sg.

About National Skin Centre

The National Skin Centre (NSC) is an outpatient specialist dermatological centre with a team of dermatologists who have the experience and expertise to treat a wide variety of skin conditions. The Centre also aims to facilitate subspecialisation and be the national focus for the treatment, research, and training on all aspects of skin disease. As a subsidiary of the National Healthcare Group, NSC shares the vision of Adding Years of Healthy Life to the Singapore population. With a comprehensive range of subspecialty services and serving about 70 percent of dermatology outpatient attendance among public healthcare institutions in Singapore, NSC is firmly established as a reputable dermatology centre locally and in the region.

NSC also collaborates with the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) to operate the Skin Research Institute of Singapore (SRIS), which focuses on conducting high impact, inter-disciplinary skin research designed to translate into improved health outcomes and quality of life. More information is available at www.nsc.com.sg.



About Biomedical Sciences Industry Partnership Office

Biomedical Sciences Industry Partnership Office (BMSIPO) helps to grow academic-industry research and clinical partnerships across Singapore's ecosystem, to enable economic growth and improve healthcare outcomes.

As a publicly funded national platform, BMSIPO works with Singapore and multinational pharmaceutical, biotech, medtech, diagnostics and digital health companies to forge impactful R&D and clinical collaboration opportunities across Singapore's universities, research institutions and healthcare clusters.