



PRESS RELEASE

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## **Biocartis and Merck to Collaborate on Improving Patient Access to Personalized Medicine in Middle East and North Africa (MEA) Region**

**Biocartis** (Mechelen, Belgium) announced an expansion of its collaboration with Merck Serono Middle East and Merck Saudi Ltd., both affiliates of Merck KGaA ("Merck"). The collaboration aims to improve patient access to RAS biomarker testing in the Middle East and North Africa (MEA) region.

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the third most common cancer worldwide, with an estimated incidence of more than 1.9 million new cases annually. An estimated 904 thousand deaths from CRC occur worldwide every year, making it the second most common cause of death from cancer.<sup>1</sup> Understanding an individual patient's biomarker status is key to support timely treatment decision-making in metastatic colorectal cancer (mCRC).<sup>2</sup> Treatment with anti-epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) monoclonal antibody therapies have shown to improve outcomes in patients with RAS wild-type mCRC<sup>3,4</sup> and have become standard of care for RAS wild-type mCRC.<sup>5</sup>

RAS biomarker testing is cumbersome and not readily available in all parts of the world. The Idylla™ KRAS Mutation Test and Idylla™ NRAS-BRAF Mutation Test are highly performant<sup>6</sup> Tests that rapidly determine the RAS biomarker status in mCRC tumor tissue samples. Due to the ease-of-use of the Biocartis Idylla™ Platform, the Tests can be deployed in any user setting and in turn aid patient access to biomarker testing globally.

**Roger Moody, Chief Executive Officer of Biocartis**, commented: *"We are thrilled to announce the expansion of our collaboration with Merck in the Middle East and North Africa (MEA) region, aimed at advancing healthcare solutions and ensuring timely and accurate diagnostics for mCRC patients. In our mission to enable universal access to personalized medicine for patients around the world, Biocartis is proud to provide Idylla™'s cutting-edge technology for mCRC testing across countries in the MEA region. This collaboration underscores our shared dedication to overcoming the challenges in the healthcare environment of the MEA region and ensuring that patients receive the right medicine at the right time."*

**Ramsey Morad, SVP & Head MEAR - Middle East, Africa, Turkey & Russia/CIS at Merck**, added: *"In line with our commitment at Merck to enhance patient care in the MEA region, we are happy to collaborate with Biocartis in addressing the critical need for improved access to RAS biomarker testing, particularly in areas where such testing is not readily available. By leveraging Biocartis' RAS-testing platform, we are confident this will allow treating oncologists to swiftly determine biomarker status and facilitate timely treatment decisions for patients with metastatic colorectal cancer."*

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### **More information:**

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<sup>1</sup> Globocan, <http://globocan.iarc.fr>

<sup>2</sup> Emiloju OE et al. *Curr Treat Options Oncol* (2023) 24: 1739-57

<sup>3</sup> Douillard J-Y, et al. *N Engl J Med* (2013) 369: 1023-34

<sup>4</sup> Schwartzberg LS, et al. *J Clin Oncol* (2014) 32: 2240-7

<sup>5</sup> Kasi PM, et al. *Oncologist* (2023) 28: 1034-48

<sup>6</sup> Weyn et al. *BMC Cancer* (2017) 17:139-49

## About Biocartis

With its revolutionary and proprietary Idylla™ Platform, Biocartis aspires to enable personalized medicine for patients around the world through universal access to molecular testing, by making molecular testing actionable, convenient, fast and suitable for any lab. The Idylla™ Platform is a fully automated sample-to-result, real-time PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) based system designed to offer in-house access to accurate molecular information in a minimum amount of time for faster, informed treatment decisions. Idylla™'s continuously expanding menu of molecular diagnostic tests addresses key unmet clinical needs, with a focus in oncology. This is the fastest growing segment of the molecular diagnostics market worldwide. Today, Biocartis offers tests supporting melanoma, colorectal, lung, breast, thyroid and liver cancer. More information: [www.biocartis.com](http://www.biocartis.com). Follow us on [X \(Twitter\)](#): @Biocartis.

## About Merck KGaA

Merck, a leading science and technology company, operates across healthcare, life science and electronics. Around 64,200 employees work to make a positive difference to millions of people's lives every day by creating more joyful and sustainable ways to live. From advancing gene editing technologies and discovering unique ways to treat the most challenging diseases to enabling the intelligence of devices – the company is everywhere. In 2022, Merck generated sales of € 22.2 billion in 66 countries.

Scientific exploration and responsible entrepreneurship have been key to Merck's technological and scientific advances. This is how Merck has thrived since its founding in 1668. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed company. Merck holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the business sectors of Merck operate as EMD Serono in healthcare, Millipore Sigma in life science, and EMD Electronics.

*The Idylla™ Platform is CE-marked in Europe in compliance with EU IVD Regulation 2017/746, cleared for sale in the US and registered in many other countries. Idylla™ KRAS and NRAS-BRAF Mutation Tests are CE-marked in Europe in compliance with the EU IVD directive 98/79/EC. Biocartis and Idylla™ are registered trademarks in Europe, the United States and other countries. The Biocartis and Idylla™ trademark and logo are used trademarks owned by Biocartis. Please refer to the product labeling for applicable intended uses for each individual Biocartis product. © May 2024, Biocartis NV. All rights reserved.*