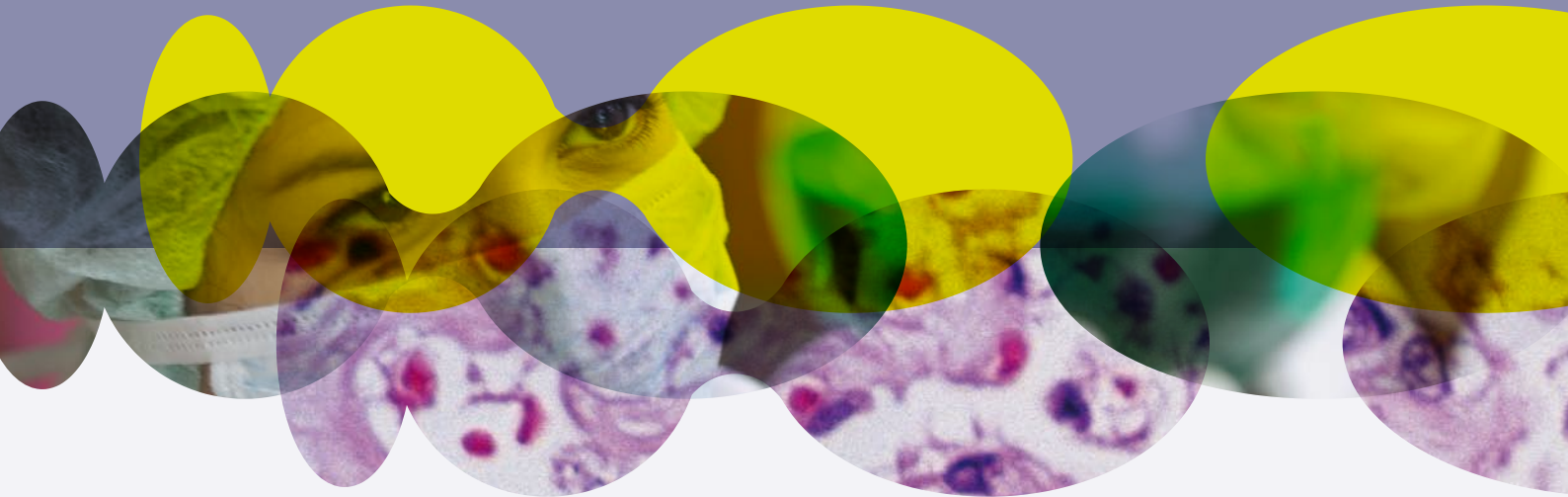


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press release



Academia and Pharma industry team up for better pain killers

The first research project in the program of the Dutch Top Institute Pharma focuses on innovative research for the development of novel analgesics. The partners in this TI Pharma project include the University Medical Centre Groningen, bio-pharmaceutical company Organon, and clinical research organization PRA international. They will work closely together with the Neuro-imaging Pain Centre at Oxford University.

Dr. W. Timmerman of PRA International: "This study on pain opens up opportunities to develop new, more effective analgesics. It will be conducted on the basis of the latest insights and with state-of-the-art technology. With this study, The Netherlands joins the ranks of international top research."

The study will be conducted in both healthy volunteers as well as in patients suffering from pain. With the aid of fMRI scanning techniques, the involvement of the brain in pain sensation is examined. Dr. Timmerman: "Pain is subjective and is experienced differently by individuals. For instance, well being,

attention and fear effect the way pain is perceived. In this study we objectively register what happens in the brain when an individual experiences pain. We explore a completely new source of scientific information and expect that it will enable us to improve pain treatment."

According to Timmerman, the cooperation between academia and pharma industry will improve the research process. "With a method to objectively measure pain, drugs in development can be tested. By using this technology, we can decide at a very early stage that a new drug has no meaningful effect on pain. If so, further development can

be stopped, saving a lot of resources that can go into development of more promising medicines. All this is to the advantage of the patient. The pharma industry can develop new medicines both more effectively and in a shorter period of time. It also opens up the possibilities to develop drugs, which are effective for pain that is hard to treat, as occurs with diabetes and shingles (herpes zoster)".

TI Pharma is a structural network collaboration between industrial and academic research teams. The Institute conducts pre-competitive research aimed at developing better and safer medicines, in a more efficient way. Annually the Dutch government contributes 30 million Euros to the strategic R & D program, matching the funding of pharmaceutical industry and universities at 15 million Euros per year each.

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