



SLC30A8 (ZnT-8)

A gene highly associated with Type 2 Diabetes risk

PRESS RELEASE

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An international consortium headed by **Prof. Philippe Froguel** (CNRS, France and Imperial College, London) and **Prof. Robert Sladek** (McGill University Montréal) has published this important discovery today in the February 11 issue of **Nature**¹ in an effort requiring the complete genome analysis of thousands of patients. **This paper reports identification of mutations occurring in 70% of those at risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes (T2D).**

A gene mutation map of T2D has been elucidated thanks to the use of a new DNA chip able to analyse simultaneously 400 000 mutations (SNPs).

One of the first of these mutations found on **SLC30A8** gene is represented in almost **25% of the global population at risk of developing T2D**. This SLC30A8 gene is exclusively expressed in pancreatic insulin producing cells (Beta Cells) and encodes a **Zinc transporter (ZnT8)** closely associated with the process of storage and release of insulin^{2,3}.

ZnT8 represents a **first line therapeutic target**.

T2D is thought to have pandemic potential, with 200 million patients today and an estimated 300 million before 2025. This Nature publication validates the patented R&D approach of **MELLITECH**.

Since its inception in 2005 **MELLITECH** (spin-off of CEA Grenoble and Université Joseph Fourier) has advanced its therapeutic and diagnostic discovery program based on the SLC30A8/ZnT8 concept.

MELLITECH is actively pursuing “SERIES A” financing to boost the development of its pipeline of original molecules to bring relief to patients with type 2 diabetes.

References:

(1) A genome-wide association study identifies novel risk loci for type 2 diabetes.

Sladek R. & al., Nature 2007 Feb 11;

(2) Identification and cloning of a beta-cell-specific zinc transporter, ZnT-8, localized into insulin secretory granules.

Chimienti F. & al., Diabetes. 2004 Sep; 53(9):2330-7.

(3) In vivo expression and functional characterization of the zinc transporter ZnT8 in glucose-induced insulin secretion.

Chimienti F. & al., J Cell Sci. 2006 Oct 15; 119(Pt 20):4199-206.

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