

Cuba Develops Effective Peptide Against COVID-19

By: Telesur
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Cuba's Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB) developed the CIGB-258, a new protein effective in Covid-19 treatment.

"It is an immunomodulatory peptide, derived from the cellular stress response protein, known as HSP60. This molecule was designed by bioinformatic tools and is obtained by chemical synthesis," affirmed CIGB's researcher Dr. Gillian Martinez Donato.

According to Martinez, CIGB-258 operates in the regulation of the immune system. This protein increases its concentration during viral infections and inflammatory processes.

The CIGB requested the use of CIGB-258 in COVID confirmed patients in the severe and critical stages. Since May 5, 31 patients had received therapy with this peptide.

As Donato explained, 12 patients started CIGB-258 therapy in their severe stages and 19 in the critical disease phase. In the first group, survival was 92 percent, while in the second group it was 73 percent. "Cuba's Minister of Health, Jose Angel Portal Miranda, referred to the contributions of the pharmaceutical and biotechnological industry, with innovative products for the treatment of the disease, such as recombinant Interferon alpha 2b, monoclonal antibodies, the CIGB-258 peptide and Surfacen."

"This peptide is safe, with evidence of efficacy in an initial clinical study phase in patients with rheumatoid arthritis, by reducing the clinical activity associated with that condition, including synovitis and edema in the hands of patients," Martinez stated.

The CIGB submitted the request to the Cuban Center for Medicines, Equipment, and Medical Devices' Control (Cecmed) for its therapeutic use in confirmed patients of the COVID-19 in the severe and critical stages.

“A phase II clinical trial is currently underway in 187 patients with rheumatoid arthritis, and the results will be ready by the end of 2020,” the CIGB specialist explained.

So far, Cuba registered 1,881 positive cases of coronavirus, including 79 deaths, and 1,505 recoveries.
