
Cuban Biotech could save thousands of lives in U.S.

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Among those products from Cuba's biotech industry stands out Heberprot-P, developed by the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB). Heberprot-P has prevented thousands of patients from leg amputations and is the only one of its kind in the international market. Today, it is marketed throughout Cuba and in 23 countries, but hasn't reached US health centers yet due to the regulations imposed by the blockade.

"Cuba has a prevalence of diabetic people of around 870,000 patients, some 10,000 of whom have complex ulcers. Heberprot-P therapy prevents over 32,000 people from amputations and today we can say that throughout the country there are less than 900 annual amputations", explains Dr. Manuel Raíces Pérez-Castañeda, Business Development executive at the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology.

How many people could benefit with Heberprot-P in the United States, where there are 23 million diabetic people and 73,000 diabetic foot amputations every year? Dr. Raices has the answer.

"If Heberprot-P therapy could be introduced as a therapeutic tool inside the battle of US health system to control amputations, just taking into consideration Cuba's results, around 50,000 amputations could be avoided annually".

The same applies to products from the Center for Molecular Immunology, such as the

therapeutic vaccine for lung cancer, which improves the quality of life of patients, and monoclonal antibody Nimotuzumab, registered in 30 countries and that has reported therapeutic effect data in head and neck, brain and esophagus cancer, and recently a clinical trial finished with interesting results for pancreatic cancer.

According to Dr. Agustín Lage, director of the Center for Molecular Immunology, "At present, some 10,000 people benefit from those products and possible links with US scientists will further expand that range of positive effects".

"We have a product, they have another product, and the patient may benefit from the simultaneous use of both. And that's the idea we're discussing with this antibody that has been widely used in the world", argues the Cuban scientist.

Cuban biotech, which covers the full cycle of research, development, production and commercialization of its results, and shows scientific achievements of great social impact in Cuba and the world, could also save and relieve the live of thousands of American patients, affected by diabetes and other ailments.

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