

INTERVIEW WITH GARY LESSING

CEO OF CORRIDOR PHARMACEUTICALS

1 Briefly describe your top drug candidates and their application for space and Earth-based health care.

Dysfunction of the endothelium (the lining of the blood vessel) contributes to many diseases such as atherosclerosis, coronary disease, systemic and pulmonary hypertension, and diabetes. These conditions are associated with an increase in arginase activity and a decrease in nitric oxide. We are focused on the discovery and development of novel therapeutics for vascular diseases based on our proprietary arginase inhibition platform. The novel therapeutics will also mitigate the damage done to the lining of blood vessels during radiation exposure experienced in space travel and radiation treatment for cancer.

2 How has your involvement with the space program and, in particular, NSBRI impacted the way that your program developed?

Living in reduced gravity during space travel impairs the ability of the vessels of the heart to contract and expand. We hypothesized that an increase in endothelial cell-dependent vasodilator mechanisms, rather than a decrease in vasoconstrictor mechanisms, underlies the loss of contractility of the vessels. With funding from NSBRI and the NIH, we studied the pathways and enzymes involved in regulating blood vessel dilation in various disease states and normal aging. This work led to the identification of a new approach to treatment via the inhibition of the enzyme arginase. This is now the basis of a drug discovery platform for a new startup company.

3 Describe a key collaborator and how he or she shaped the direction of your company and/or technology.

Dr. Dan Berkowitz has focused his academic research on the role of arginase in the pathology of vascular dysfunction. His key insights and experimental work have elucidated the importance of arginase in endothelial dysfunction in aging and atherosclerosis. He has identified signal transduction mechanisms and demonstrated proof-of-concept in rodent models.

4 Describe a key event that had the most impact on the company.

Demonstrating proof of concept for arginase inhibitors in rodent models of human vascular disease was a key event because it convinced leading life sciences venture capitalists to complete several rounds of equity financing of our startup company. Arginetix Inc. was recently merged with Immune Control to form Corridor Pharmaceuticals Inc., which has raised \$15 million in Series-A financing to date.

5 What is next for the company in the next one to two years?

With the use of medicinal chemistry techniques and enzyme assays, Corridor Pharmaceuticals Inc. will continue to design, optimize, synthesize, and develop novel therapeutics. These drug candidates will undergo further testing to support the filing of an application to the FDA for an Investigational New Drug (IND) and the initiation of human clinical trials for pulmonary arterial hypertension.

