

Single-cell omics and AI-fueled discovery to help endometriosis patients

In a stride towards non-surgical endometriosis diagnosis, Hera Biotech has announced its impending acquisition of endometriosis diagnostic assets from Scailyte, a company active in single-cell and AI-driven biomarker discovery. This acquisition marks a notable consolidation in the tissue-based diagnostic landscape for endometriosis, a prevalent condition contributing to a significant portion of female infertility and characterized by severe pain due to the abnormal growth of uterine-like tissue outside the uterus.

Standard diagnosis methods involve invasive laparoscopic surgery, leading to delayed diagnosis. However, the collaborative research between Hera Biotech and Scailyte, along with their academic partners, has led to the development of complementary biomarkers and assays, presenting a more direct, accurate, and non-invasive diagnostic approach. This consolidation is expected to speed up the creation of clinical tools for diagnosing and stratifying endometriosis patients and facilitate the development of targeted therapies.

Scailyte CEO, Dr. Peter Nestorov, commented: “We are excited to work with Hera to integrate Scailyte’s endometriosis assets into the Hera pipeline. Through our collaboration with Prof. Michael Mueller from the University of Bern, we have generated the largest single-cell RNAseq datasets from peripheral blood and endometrial tissue. The insights we gained clearly indicate that the tissue-based approach is the only way to capture the complexity and heterogeneity of endometriosis, and therefore tissue-based molecular assays will be the only viable alternative to laparoscopy for a definitive diagnosis and patient stratification.”

The initial product in the combined portfolio utilizes Scailyte’s deep sequencing discovery platform, promising a highly specific and robust diagnostic assay for endometriosis. Hera Biotech aims to launch this product in the US fertility market by late 2024, followed by another product for the definitive diagnosis and staging of endometriosis in the OB/GYN market.

“We are delighted that this partnership also affords Hera the opportunity to add Dr. Cinzia Donato to our executive team and Professor Michael Mueller to our scientific advisory board. Dr. Donato and Professor Mueller were the driving forces behind Scailyte’s endometriosis diagnostic program and bring a breadth of scientific and commercial skills to complement Hera’s in-house diagnostic programs. We are excited to announce this partnership in conjunction with our \$15M Series A raise, which we are kicking off at the JP Morgan Healthcare conference next week,” said Somer Baburek, CEO Hera Biotech.

The transaction is expected to be finalized by the end of January 2024, post the completion of due diligence.