



Beijing Lab Honored with Gates Grand Challenge Award in Global Health

The Institute for Medicinal Biotechnology of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences (CAMS) in Beijing has received a grant award from the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health as part of the **Grand Challenges in Global Health Initiative (GCGHI)**. This initiative was launched with support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Professor Jian-Dong Jiang of the Institute of Medicinal Biotechnology is the principal investigator (PI) of the project and one of the two lead investigators from China honored as a grant recipient of GCGHI. Dr. Jiang's program proposes to discover new treatments for HIV, tuberculosis, and hepatitis B that minimize the likelihood of developing drug resistant micro-organisms. Dr. Jiang's team includes major partnerships with the **Public Health Research Institute (PHRI) in Newark, NJ** and the Institute of Hematology (Tianjing, China), and Institute of Medicinal Plants of CAMS (Beijing).

The evolution and spread of drug resistant pathogens presents a growing problem worldwide. The concept of Chinese medicine called "Wei Qi" or "protection from inside" will be adopted to identify novel drugs that control pathogen infection by targeting host cell components that are critical for the replication of microorganisms but not essential for cell survival. By targeting components of human cells and not the microbes themselves, the researchers believe that it will be much more difficult for the microbes to develop drug resistance.

The Institute for Medicinal Biotechnology is one of the major Chinese national institutes for drug research. It has 400 staff and faculty members working on natural drugs against human diseases especially bacterial, viruses, cardiovascular diseases and cancers, and has particularly made a crucial contribution in China for the control of infectious diseases since it was founded in 1950's. The Public Health Research Institute in Newark (NJ) is an internationally recognized institute for the research on tuberculosis biology and its mutant strains. Dr. Barry Kreiswirth of PHRI will serve as a co-PI of the project. The Institute of Hematology and Institute of Medicinal Plants of CAMS are important institutes in China for the research on medical biology and medicinal plants.