

Laboratoires Expanscience acquires Medtech Sublimed

Paris La Défense, March 20th, 2023 – Laboratoires Expanscience is involved in developing new solutions for relieving osteoarthritis-related knee pain, and announces the acquisition of the start-up Medtech Sublimed, specialized in developing medical devices for managing chronic pain.

Sublimed was established in October 2015 by Nicolas Karst and Dr. Jean-Pierre Alibeu, former Head of the Pain Center at Grenoble University Hospital, with the aim of developing solutions that can improve daily life for people suffering from chronic pain. In June 2016, Sublimed raised more than €700k in its first round of funding, then secured a second round for 2.1 million euros in December 2018 to finance its clinical developments and international expansion. To date more than 20,000 patients have already used solutions SUBLIMED has developed to relieve their chronic pain.

With this acquisition, Laboratoires Expanscience—historically specialized in developing dermo-cosmetic products (Mustela), natural cosmetic active ingredients, and rheumatology—sets itself the objective of:

- **Enriching its product portfolio for osteoarthritis management and diversifying its research and development expertise** through integrating a team specialized in chronic pain. This will enable **Laboratoires Expanscience to broaden out into new fields of innovation in the field of non-drug pain management**, whether related to osteoarthritis or not. Consistent with Laboratoires Expanscience and Sublimed DNA, this research will be carried out on the principle of open innovation, in collaboration with health professionals and people experiencing chronic pain.
- **Developing its rheumatology business in the United States.** This project is currently being explored, and will result in Sublimed's medical device for treating osteoarthritis of the knee being rolled out on the American market. SUBLIMED developed a neurostimulation method to treat chronic osteoarthritis pain in the knee, which it patented in the USA, the patent of which was granted in July 2022⁽¹⁾. It also forms an effective drug-free alternative to analgesic drug treatments.

⁽¹⁾ Soriot-Thomas et al. <https://image-ppubs.uspto.gov/dirsearch-public/print/downloadPdf/20200147378>

"We are very enthusiastic about this merger. After acquiring Babo Botanicals in 2018, which enabled us to accelerate our growth on the dermo-cosmetics market, this operation for external growth opens a new chapter for Expanscience. The Sublimed acquisition will enable us to diversify and innovate together to continually better support those living with chronic pain", states Jean-Paul Berthomé, President of Laboratoires Expanscience.

"We are very happy to be able to join forces with a leading company in rheumatology like Laboratoires Expanscience. We share firm values and are eager to be able to work closely with their teams to enable those living with chronic pain around the world to be more comfortable in their life each day", says Nicolas Karst, Sublimed CEO and co-founder.

A merger undertaken in a logic of open innovation, and true to Expanscience values

This agreement, which came into effective on March 6, 2023, follows on from a long collaboration between the two companies. It was started in 2016 as part of the Expanscience open innovation process, resulting in developing and marketing VitaliTENS as a drug-free alternative to painkillers.

This collaboration is also related to how the two companies' values match. Sublimed chose to manufacture in France from the outset for social and ecological reasons, going on to integrate sustainable development issues into its company strategy in 2019, before supporting the United National Global Compact from 2020. *"We are a socially-aware start-up, and to this end it was important for us to join a company that shares our values. Expanscience checked that box as it is B Corp-certified and is deeply committed to ecological transition issues",* continues Nicolas Karst.

"This merger enables us to provide a non-drug alternative to patients for pain relief and continue to have better control of our value chain. The collaboration between the Sublimed and Laboratoires Expanscience teams opens new impetus for innovation", adds Sophie Robert-Velut, General Manager of the Laboratoires Expanscience Dermo-Cosmetics, Rheumatology and Dermatology businesses, to which the Sublimed teams will be linked.

The merger was coordinated by Dentons consultants for Expanscience, and Kelten Avocats Grenoble and Natixis Partners Paris for Sublimed.

Osteoarthritis, a systemic, common, silent disease

Osteoarthritis is one of the silent diseases that affects more than 500 million people around the world, with 10 million in France ⁽²⁾, and 2.5 million of them experiencing osteoarthritis of the knee. Its prevalence increases on a regular basis due to the population aging and obesity increasing ⁽³⁾.

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(2) Source <https://www.stop-arthrose.org/resultats-de-la-premiere-grande-enquete-193>

(3) Conaghan PG et al. Inadequate pain relief and large functional loss among patients with knee osteoarthritis: evidence from a prospective multinational longitudinal study of osteoarthritis real-world therapies. *Rheum.* 2015;54:270-7

About Laboratoires Expanscience:

You don't give your all without a good reason. At Expanscience, we are a mission-driven company and our purpose is to help individuals shape their well-being, from the youngest to the oldest. That's what has motivated us to move forward, carry out research and innovate for over 70 years. Independence is our lifeblood. We're a French company that is 100% family-owned, with products in over 100 countries and brands like Mustela and Babo Botanicals. For us it's clear: the well-being of people cannot be separated from that of the planet, and it's up to all of us to ensure this. Our positive impact on society and the environment has been recognized by the B Corp label, and through our "impACT" CSR program we are undertaking to being a company which has positive, regenerating impact.

Laboratoires Expanscience at a glance:

- Founded in 1950
- Four businesses: Dermo-Cosmetics, Dermatology, Rheumatology, Cosmetic Active Ingredients
- 2022 revenue (estimated): €324M, 77% of which from international sales
- 1098 employees and 14 subsidiaries
- 3.2% of revenue invested in research and development
- For more information: www.expanscience.com

About SUBLIMED

SUBLIMED is an innovative start-up specialized in the developing medical devices for managing chronic pain. The company was founded in October 2015 by Nicolas Karst, an engineer at the CEA, and Dr. Jean-Pierre Alibeu, former Head of the Pain Center at Grenoble University Hospital. The company places the patient at the center of its thinking by working directly with them and expert doctors to develop devices that are ever more suited to patients experiencing chronic pain. SUBLIMED relies exclusively on medical prescription to distribute its products. SUBLIMED committed to United Nations Global Compact social responsibility initiative from 2020, and the 10 principles it puts forward around human rights, labor standards, the environment and combating corruption.

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