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**ZenBio, Inc. Awarded a Phase I SBIR Grant for the Development of a Human Brown Adipocyte Cell Model System**

**RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC** - ZenBio, Inc. announced that it has been awarded a Phase I SBIR grant to develop a primary human brown adipocyte system. The award from the National Institutes of Health will fund the development of novel human brown fat screening tools which are currently unavailable to researchers and provide a high throughput drug discovery platform to identify and validate drug targets for anti-obesity therapeutics.

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions globally over the past decades causing a surge in associated comorbidities such as type II diabetes. Research targeting obesity is now a priority. In rodents, stimulation of brown adipose tissue activity and/or the browning of white adipose results in elevated energy expenditure and reduced adiposity. However, the therapeutic relevance to humans remains undefined due to the lack of a well-established human brown adipocyte system.

ZenBio's human brown adipocyte program is a response to this clear and urgent need from the biopharmaceutical community for well characterized and validated human brown adipocyte platforms for biomarker validation and screening purposes. ZenBio is a global provider of human primary adipocytes and the first to commercialize a human primary white adipocyte system and is therefore uniquely positioned to generate and provide these cells. Once available, the brown adipocyte system can be used to identify novel human biomarkers and validate existing drug targets for the development of anti-obesity therapeutics. The addition of the human brown adipocyte system will significantly expand ZenBio's existing cell-based systems and screening platforms focused on metabolic diseases and related disorders.

**About ZenBio, Inc.**

**ZenBio, Inc.**, a privately held biotechnology company, is a leading provider of research tools for the study of human metabolic disease. Founded in 1995, the company performs contract research for major pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies around the world. ZenBio pioneered tissue engineering with adult adipose-derived stem cells and is currently investigating the role obesity plays in the development and onset of metabolic disease. Its mission is to provide the highest quality cells, reagents and contract services to the biomedical research community; to develop and commercialize research tools; and to leverage its expertise in this field as a contract research organization.

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