

Potential new pain killer drug developed by scientists at Leicester and Italy

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A potential new pain-killing drug developed by medical scientists at the University of Leicester and Ferrara in Italy is to be discussed at a public lecture on 20th March.

Professor David Lambert, who has been involved in the development the drug in collaboration with Dr Girolamo Calo in Ferrara Italy, believes the new drug – called UFP-101 - avoids many of the side effects of morphine, currently the ‘gold standard’ in pain reduction.

He said: "In a 2005 survey for the British Pain Society 975 people were questioned about pain. Twenty one percent experienced pain every day or most days equating to ~10million across the whole UK.

"Morphine produces its clinical effects by interaction with opioid receptors. In addition to acting as a pain killer this drug produces a number of unwanted side effects of importance from a clinical (e.g., depression of breathing, constipation and tolerance) and social (addiction) viewpoints.

"Clearly there is a place for new morphine like drugs without these side effects and the University of Leicester Anaesthesia Division has been at the forefront of such preclinical research."

Since appointment in 1991 as a lecturer Professor Lambert has been working on opioids and opioid receptors with particular emphasis on understanding receptor function and the design and evaluation of new

drugs to target these receptors.

In collaboration with Dr Girolamo Calo his laboratory has characterised a prototype analgesic (pain killer), acting at a new opioid receptor, with a much reduced side effect profile.

In his inaugural lecture he will describe the current place of opioids in the clinic and development of UFP-101.

Source: University of Leicester

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