



HEALTHCARE

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ImmunogenX Begins Celiac Disease Trial

Mayo Clinic, Columbia University to Study

Newport Beach-based **ImmunogenX LLC**, an early-stage drug developer, earlier this month said it began patient enrollment for its Phase 2b clinical trial for its treatment of celiac disease, an incurable digestive ailment that destroys the lining of the intestines.

The new trial indicates that the company is tracking its stated 18-month trajectory to commercialization, a timeline which may beat competitors by three to five years, according to co-founder and Chief Executive **Jack Syage**.

The Phase 2b clinical trial will be conducted at the **Mayo Clinic** in Rochester, Minn. and at **Columbia University** in New

York. Last year, **Stanford University Medical Center** led the Phase 2a trial.

The company's product, called Latiglutenase, is designed to break down gluten in the stomach.

Celiac disease is a combination of an allergy and an autoimmune condition involving gluten that causes destruction of the lining in the intestines, which when ingesting gluten results in bloating, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain. About 3 million Americans have the illness.

ImmunogenX has raised \$5 million from investors. It has also won three grants totaling an additional \$6 million from different centers at Bethesda, Md.'s National Institutes of Health.

This trial is being funded by a \$2.3 million grant from the NIH's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

Syage in 2011 sold his Tustin-based company **Syagen Technology Inc.**, a provider of chemical analysis instruments to detect explosives carried by airline passengers, to French company **Safran**, for an undisclosed amount. He has about 30 patents issued or pending, published more than 120 papers and given 80 invited talks.

For more on Safran's local operations, see the Feb. 17 print edition of the Business Journal. ■



Syage knows research and business

ImmunogenX LLC



- **FOUNDED:** 2013
- **CEO:** Jack Syage
- **HEADQUARTERS:** Newport Beach
- **BUSINESS:** celiac treatment
- **REVENUE:** pre-revenue/the celiac treatment market is projected to be \$550 million by 2023
- **NOTABLE:** has raised more than \$5 million from investors