

***C. albicans* genes uncovered**

Mycota Biosciences Inc., Canada, has identified 900 essential genes of *Candida albicans*, the most prevalent human fungal pathogen. Until recently, only 20 essential genes of *C. albicans* were available. Using proprietary technologies, scientists added more genes to the list, opening up new drug discovery opportunities. This latest development increases the likelihood of finding novel series of lead compounds for antifungal drug discovery.

C. albicans causes a broad range of infections – from diaper rash and vaginitis to life-threatening infections in patients whose immune systems have been disabled by HIV, cancer, transplants and surgeries. It is the fourth most common infectious agent detected in the bloodstreams of hospital patients. All the commonly prescribed antifungal drugs generally must be taken for prolonged periods but have significant side effects and/or limited success. The discovery of safer and more specific antifungal drugs would greatly enhance healthcare and life expectancy of patients.

Mycota Biosciences has already begun the primary drug screening phase to find antifungal targets for *C. albicans*. The company will also start high-throughput drug discovery using DNA-chip and other screening methods. *Contact: Mycota Biosciences Inc., 225 President Kennedy Ave. West, Suite 2550, Montreal, PQ, H2X 3Y8, Canada. Tel: +1 (514) 9870 415; Fax: +1 (514) 9870 389; E-mail: info @mycota.com. (Website: <http://www.bioresearchonline.com>)*