

Evonik acquires German biotech company JeNaCell to expand biomaterials portfolio for new medical device markets

- Nanostructured biomaterial for wound dressings and dermatology to be integrated into Health Care business
- Evonik Venture Capital's early investment in 2015 pays off
- Evonik aims to more than double the share of system solutions in Nutrition & Care by 2030

Essen, Germany. Evonik has acquired German biotech company JeNaCell. The acquisition expands Evonik's biomaterials portfolio to provide biotechnologically derived cellulose. The nature-identical material developed by JeNaCell is used in medical technology and dermatology for the treatment of wounds and burns as well as in hydroactive skin care. The employees of JeNaCell will continue to work at the development and production site based in Jena, Germany.

Evonik recognized JeNaCell's potential in 2015 and invested in the start-up through its own venture capital arm. Following the complete takeover, JeNaCell's portfolio will be integrated into Evonik's health care business. The company accelerates the portfolio shift of its Nutrition & Care division towards system solutions and expands the division-wide technology platform of natural materials for medical technology. The share of system solutions in Nutrition & Care is to be increased from 20 percent today to more than 50 percent by 2030.

"JeNaCell has developed one of the most innovative biomaterials for medical device technologies. With the help of the creativity and expertise of JeNaCell's specialists, we will ensure that even more patients benefit from these products in the future," said Thomas Riermeier, head of Evonik's Health Care business line. "The acquisition will help us to further strengthen our position as an innovation hub for the world's leading medical technology companies."

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“The acquisition by Evonik is a quantum leap for JeNaCell to realize the full potential of our innovative technology,” said Dana Kralisch, Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of JeNaCell. “We are excited to have found a strong and trusted partner to develop our technology platform and a new home for our passionate team of experts. Together, we will expand our customer base and explore new application areas.”

The acquisition confirms Evonik Venture Capital’s strategy of investing early in start-ups with visionary technology that are relevant to Evonik's innovation growth fields.

“JeNaCell is a great example for the innovation strength and the value that startups can bring to corporations,” said Bernhard Mohr, head of Evonik Venture Capital. “We recognized the importance of the industry shift to nature-identical materials early on and are very happy to have supported the development of this technology with our investment.”

JeNaCell began as a spinoff company from the Friedrich-Schiller-University of Jena in Germany. In 2017, the company launched its first product *epicite*, a medical wound dressing for the treatment of chronic wounds, surgical wounds and burns that is based on biotechnologically derived cellulose. It is a skin-friendly and soft biomaterial that provides a healing-promoting microclimate on the wound and can be removed painlessly. Further technologies developed by JeNaCell include soft tissue implants, transdermal delivery systems and dermatological applications.

JeNaCell's product developments are complementary to the portfolio of Evonik's Health Care business, which is a leading global solutions provider for innovative materials for medical device and pharmaceutical markets. RESOMER®, now commercially available for more than 30 years, is the industry’s most comprehensive GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) portfolio of standard, custom and specialized bioresorbable polymers for use with implantable medical devices and pharmaceutical drug products.

Company information

Evonik is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. The company is active in more than 100 countries around the world and generated sales of €12.2 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of €1.91 billion in 2020. Evonik goes far beyond chemistry to create innovative, profitable and sustainable solutions for customers. More than 33,000 employees work together for a common purpose: We want to improve life today and tomorrow.

About Nutrition & Care

The focus of the business of the Nutrition & Care division is on health and quality of life. It develops differentiated solutions for active pharmaceutical ingredients, medical devices, nutrition for humans and animals, personal care, cosmetics, and household cleaning. In these resilient end markets, the division generated sales of around three billion euros in 2020 with about 5,300 employees.

About Evonik Venture Capital

With a fund size of €250 million, Evonik Venture Capital (EVC) has made more than 30 investments since 2012, both direct and fund investments. EVC has offices in Germany, the U.S.A. and China and invests in innovative technologies and disruptive business models in the fields of Nutrition & Care, Specialty Additives and Smart Materials, as well as enabling digital technologies. The EVC team of experienced investment managers provide portfolio companies comprehensive support. The investment scope ranges from early stage to growth stage with investment volume per portfolio company of up to €15 million.

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