

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MENSSANA RESEARCH INC. RECEIVES A \$4.2 MILLION BARDA CONTRACT TO DEVELOP A BREATHALYZER TEST FOR RADIATION EXPOSURE

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Fort Lee, NJ— The Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) has awarded Menssana Research Inc. a contract for \$4.2 million plus options, which could total \$22.84 million, if exercised, to develop a breath test for radiation exposure.

A radiologic or nuclear event such as an accident involving radioactive materials or a “dirty bomb” explosion could injure a large number of people. Emergency responders would need to rapidly screen and identify those who have been exposed to radiation. This will require a new kind of screening test to measure radiation effects on the human body.

Menssana Research has developed a sensitive breathalyzer which can detect several hundred different chemical compounds in normal human breath. The breathalyzer is much more sensitive than those police use to measure blood alcohol concentrations, and is currently in studies to identify disease biomarkers in patients with lung cancer, breast cancer, and tuberculosis. A pilot study also

identified biomarkers of radiation exposure in cancer patients receiving radiation therapy. The Menssana breathalyzer is safe, painless and non-invasive, and only requires a person to breathe gently into a mouthpiece for two minutes.

Potentially, it could provide a rapid and reliable diagnostic test to screen large numbers of casualties.

The breath test for biomarkers of radiation exposure will be evaluated in patients receiving radiation as part of their normal scheduled treatment. Five medical centers will participate in the study, including Christiana Health Care System in Delaware, MD Anderson Medical Center in Orlando, Florida, New York University Langone Medical Center, Seattle Swedish Cancer Institute, and the Veterans Administration Medical center at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). In addition, the Applied Physics Laboratory at Johns Hopkins University will evaluate breath testing in animals, the LECO Corporation in St. Joseph, Michigan will provide advanced instruments to analyze the breath samples, and American Westech, Inc, of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania will provide analytical and consultative services.

The project's long-term goal is to develop a point-of-care breathalyzer that could be used to rapidly screen large numbers of people for radiation exposure, and to determine the severity of the dose received in order to guide their medical care.