

**2007 Paul Martini Symposium in connection with the German
Academy of Natural Scientists Leopoldina
"Perspectives in Pneumological Pharmacotherapy"**

On November 9 and 10, 2007, more than 140 attendees from science and industry discussed the latest trends in pulmonary therapy with the renowned speakers during the symposium on "Perspectives in Pneumological Pharmacotherapy." The symposium was jointly organized by the Berlin-based Paul Martini Foundation and Leopoldina. It was scientifically chaired by Professor Peter C. Scriba, Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich, and Professor Werner Seeger, director of the Medical Clinic and Outpatient Clinic II of the University Clinic Gießen and Marburg.

One result of the symposium was that promising therapeutic innovations may be expected for patients suffering from pulmonary hypertension. In addition to the vasodilating pharmaceuticals of the past few years, there may soon be cancer drugs that will likely be able to reverse part of the pathological changes of the pulmonary vessels.

With regard to emphysematic conditions, it may be possible in the future to regenerate the alveoli based on processes that otherwise only occur during pre- and postnatal lung development. In this case, the lungs would be able to transfer more oxygen into the blood again.

The symposium also addressed the topic of tuberculosis. To limit the tissue damage that typically occurs in tuberculosis, new pharmaceuticals – in addition to antibiotics – could counteract a patient's excessive immune response, which can cause greater damage than the pathogen itself.

Finally, it emerged during the symposium that the lung also could become the first organ to therapeutically employ an entirely new active mechanism: the specific regulation of gene activity (gene silencing) based on artificial RNA molecules. Plans for initial patient studies were presented at the symposium.

The non-profit organization Paul Martini Foundation (PMS), Berlin, promotes pharmaceutical research as well as research concerning pharmaceutical therapy and intensifies scientific dialog on questions regarding pharmaceutical research and development between medical scientists at universities, hospitals, the research-based pharmaceutical industry, other research institutions and government agencies. To achieve this objective, the PMS awards a large annual research prize and organizes workshops and symposia.