

Contact:  
Mike Catalano  
Medicinal Genomics  
press@medicinalgenomics.com  
877-395-7608



## **Medicinal Genomics Receives NIDA Grant to Develop Novel Toxin Detection Test for Medical Cannabis**

*Test development will center around detecting presence of toxic products left behind by rogue molds and bacteria on medical cannabis*

**WOBURN, MA – January 25, 2017** – [Medicinal Genomics](#) (MGC) and [Courtagen Life Sciences](#) today announced that the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has awarded the company an SBIR Phase I grant to develop a novel test to detect toxins resulting from microbiological contamination of medical cannabis.

MGC currently produces quantitative PCR (qPCR) tests that can [detect the presence of harmful bacterial and fungal contamination](#) designed and validated specifically for cannabis. In contrast, these new tests will be developed to detect the **toxins produced by these microbes**, which may be left behind and continue to endanger the medical cannabis user even if the microbes are no longer present.

“The risks associated with medical cannabis are not stemming from the plant itself, as there have been no recorded deaths directly from cannabis overdose, unlike opioids or alcohol,” says Kevin McKernan, Chief Scientific Officer for Medicinal Genomics and Courtagen Life Sciences. “However, fungal infections, such as Aspergillus and Penicillium, have been responsible for death and illness. Having tests available to detect both the primary source of contamination and their toxic by-products will allow the industry to improve the safety profile of medical cannabis even further.”

The first test to be developed under the grant will be for the mycotoxin paxilline, a product of the *P. paxilli* fungus. Paxilline is a lipid soluble nanomolar drug that causes ryegrass staggers. Paxilline has published contra-indications with Cannabidiol in animal models and is believed to co-extract with cannabinoid extracts. Utilizing next generation sequencing of cannabis microbiomes, Medicinal Genomics was the first group to discover *P. paxilli* as a frequent threat contaminant in dispensary grade cannabis.

To learn more, visit [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). Follow on social media with hashtags #MGC #MedicinalGenomics

Medicinal Genomics and Courtagen Life Sciences will be presenting on medical cannabis safety at the CannMed 2017 Personalized Cannabinoid Medicine Conference, April 9-11, 2017 at Harvard Medical School in Boston. Speakers will include international leaders in cannabis medicine and research discussing the science and clinical practice of using medical marijuana to treat a range of conditions. This year's conference will include an option for health care professionals to earn continuing medical education credits (CMEs) in association with [TheAnswerPage.com](#). Medical practitioners that choose this registration option will also be able to choose a non-profit organization to receive a donation through the [Courtagen Gives Back Program](#). Early-bird discounts are available until February 21<sup>st</sup>.

For additional details about or to register for CannMed 2017, visit <http://www.cannmedevents.com/>.

Note to editors: Passes are available for accredited media upon request.

### **About Medicinal Genomics Corporation**

Medicinal Genomics Corporation applies state-of-the-art life science technology to cannabis plant genetics, and was the first company to sequence the cannabis genome. Our products, based on Next Generation DNA Sequencing technology, help growers, dispensaries, and safety testing laboratories characterize and understand the quality of medicinal cannabis. Medicinal Genomics is a wholly owned subsidiary of Courtagen Life Sciences, Inc. For more information, please visit <http://www.medicinalgenomics.com/>

### **About Courtagen Life Sciences, Inc.**

Courtagen Life Sciences, Inc., located in Woburn, MA, is a CLIA/CAP certified molecular information company focused on the diagnosis of a range of neurological disorders. Courtagen operates a highly sophisticated Next Generation DNA Sequencing, bioinformatics, and clinical interpretation business. Courtagen's work helps physicians elucidate the linkages between the genotypes and phenotypes of various neurological diseases. For more information, please visit <http://www.courtagen.com/>

###