

J&J acquires experimental skin disorder drug for \$1.25 billion

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London: Johnson & Johnson on Tuesday agreed to acquire the rights to an experimental skin disorder treatment from privately held Numab Therapeutics for about \$1.25 billion, its second deal for an eczema-focused company this month.

J&J will acquire a unit of Numab, backed by the parent of Danish drugmaker Novo Nordisk, to gain rights to the experimental treatment for eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis.

The disease, which affects 30 million people in the United States every year, was the focus of J&J's \$850 million acquisition of drug developer Proteologix earlier this month.

J&J, which has recently narrowed its focus to medical devices and drugs, has struck major deals this year, ahead of looming competition from biosimilars for blockbuster psoriasis treatment Stelara that are set to enter the market in 2025.

Last month, the company said it has significant flexibility to consider multiple types of transactions after agreeing to buy heart device maker Shockwave Medical for \$13.1 billion.

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Atopic dermatitis is a chronic inflammatory skin disorder that causes damage to the skin barrier, leaving it dry, itchy, and prone to skin infections.

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