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[21443001]

Immunex Corp. said its scientists isolated a molecule which may hold potential as a treatment for disruptions of the immune-system , ranging from organ-transplant rejection , to allergies and asthma .

[21443002]

The molecule is the mouse version of a protein called the interleukin-4 receptor .

[21443003]

IL-4 is a hormone which directs the growth and function of white blood cells involved in the body 's immune response .

[21443004]

The IL-4 receptor on the surface of such cells receives the hormone 's message to rally the body 's defense .

[21443005]

But in certain conditions such as autoimmune diseases and allergies and transplant rejection , doctors would like to damp the immune response so such cells do n't touch off harmful inflammatory reactions or cell destruction .

[21443006]

A soluble form of the receptor might turn off a specific part of the immune response without general immune suppression , the company said .

[21443007]

The IL-4 receptor is one of five such receptors to be developed and tested by Receptech Corp. , a spinoff of Immunex , through a proposed \$ 30 million initial public offering .

[21443008]

Immunex will contract with the spinoff to provide the research , development and initial testing of the new agents .

[21443009]

Immunex will have the option to buy back Receptech shares after five years .