

# Start-up Dzala founded to develop compounds for cellular fitness



**THE START-UP COMPANY DZALA WAS FOUNDED TO COMMERCIALISE A NEW RANGE OF PRODUCTS SUPPORTING CELLULAR FITNESS, IN PARTICULAR, NEURONAL SURVIVAL AND FUNCTION.**

## **Mitochondrial activity as key aspect of cellular fitness**

Mitochondria, the "powerhouses of the cell", are the primary source of metabolic energy and play a central role in the synthesis of essential biomolecules. Many aspects of key cellular processes, such as calcium homeostasis and cell death, are regulated by mitochondria. Thus, vitality, well-being and health depend on the proper functioning of this organelle.

Mitochondrial activity and efficiency is known to decline during a lifetime and is thought to be the component principally responsible for the ageing process. Lifestyle and environmental factors contribute to accumulating damage to mitochondria that over time exceeds the body's capacity for self-repair eventually resulting in mitochondrial dysfunction. Many disorders including cardiovascular and neurodegenerative disease, diabetes, obesity and cancer occur with profound changes in mitochondrial function and metabolism.

## **Compounds for improved mitochondrial activity**

Maintaining mitochondrial function helps people to enjoy an active life and longer lifespan and, with an appropriate life style, may reduce susceptibility towards certain diseases. There is still a need for effective remedies to re-establish mitochondrial activity or to ameliorate mitochondrial dysfunction. In addition, only few of the compounds bearing the potential to improve mitochondrial function are able to cross the blood-brain-barrier to reach the brain's neurons – the cells most sensitive to oxidative damage and mitochondrial dysfunction.

Dzala was founded to develop functional food products based on compounds that have a beneficial effect on mitochondrial integrity and function, which enable consumers to stay healthy and fit longer. The scientific evidence of Dzala's approach is based on Prof. Kurzchalia's research at the Max-Planck-Society. Founders of Dzala are: Prof. Teymuras Kurzchalia and Dr. Tim Friedrichson, researchers at the Max-Planck-Society in Germany; Saba Kiknadze, an entrepreneur from Georgia, and Dr. Gunter Festel, an entrepreneur from Switzerland.

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