

## Procare Health, a women's health specialized laboratory

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- ❖ The Catalan pharmaceutical company offers medicines based on natural ingredients, a new trend in the market.
- ❖ The company, in full expansion, prepares its landing in the USA with Papilocare, its star product.



*Illustration 1. Some of the products marketed by Procare Health*

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A laboratory focused exclusively on well-being and women's health, that offers treatments for gynecology, osteoarthritis and osteoporosis, but based on natural ingredients - plant extracts, herbs and fungi - without hormones, the great novelty at the time of their constitution.

Its founder and CEO, the French chemist Yann Gaslain, sought with Procare Health naturally woman, a different approach, more innovative, in order to face menopause, vaginal infections, female dysfunction or human papillomavirus, which is its main therapeutic occupation.

**“Women have stopped taking hormonal drugs for fear of their side effects”**

*Yann Gaslain, Procare health's CEO*

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"Between 2007 and 2010, lots of epidemiological studies were published regarding the side effects of hormones, such as the risk of cancer or cardiovascular disease. Women, for fear and the danger they represent, has stopped consuming these drugs", remembers Gaslain, with more than 10 years in Spain.

Created in 2012, this is how the idea of this pharmaceutical company arises, on the hardest year of the crisis, with a strong component of investment in R&D and an activity to which it dedicates 20% of its sales, it is a company close to four million euros in 2017.



*Illustration 2. The team, the company's capital, which has made the success of Procare Health possible*

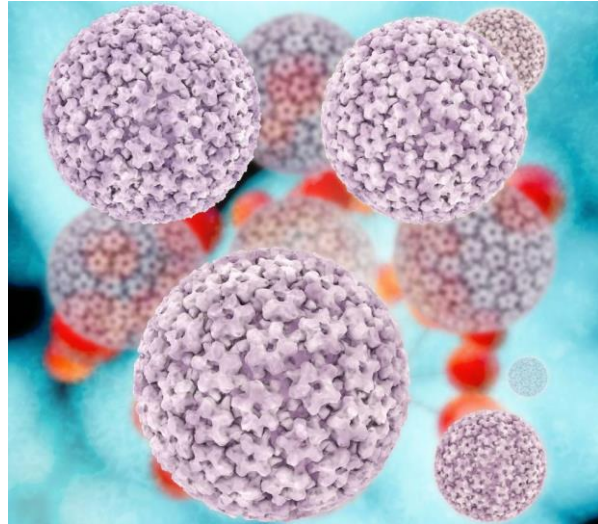
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Its birth was rather linked to the closure of the health division of the multinational Procter & Gamble in Spain in 2009 -and its subsequent sale to the Irish Warner Chilcott-, of which the Frenchman was its top executive. "When we went to register the company -this project was nourished by former P&G employees, many of whom are now partners of the firm-, the notary told me that he did not understand that a Frenchman would open a new company in Spain when he was busy closing them every day. I was a little scared, but I kept going," he says now with a smile on his face.

## Against papilloma

Papilocare is the star product of this laboratory. It is a vaginal gel launched in 2016 to prevent and treat cervical lesions caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV), a common sexually transmitted disease that causes cervical cancer and to which Procare has dedicated its greatest research efforts. Its active ingredient is the Chinese mushroom *Coriolus versicolor*, although the formulation also includes Bioecolia, Aloe vera, and *Azadirachta indica*.

"It is not preventive, like the vaccine, which is still very necessary to prevent its appearance. But, once acquired, what Papilocare allows is to normalize the cytology, It helps to negate the viral load and facilitates the body's own defense, as demonstrated by several clinical studies," he clarifies, after stating that "to date there were no treatments for this type of lesions. Although it is a free drug sold in pharmacies (20-25 euros six months therapy), the company advises to consult the gynecologist.



*Illustration 3. Human papillomavirus.*

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They complete their catalog with Palomacare (with hyaluronic acid and Asiatic pennywort, for the repair and hydration of the vaginal mucosa, 15-20 euros), Hidracare (only for vaginal dryness, with hyaluronic acid and Bioecolia, 10-12 euros) and Libicare (recently launched, 25-30 euros, which increases sexual desire and arousal of women in two months of therapy by secreting testosterone endogenously, unlike exogenous hormone patches, in circumstances of menopause or postpartum).

In rheumatology, Procure Health offers Pronolis, a high-density hyaluronic acid that reduces pain linked to osteoarthritis in the short and long term, up to 6 and 12 months, according to the clinical trials presented at a European congress in June by Dr. Jordi Monfort, head of the rheumatology service at the Hospital del Mar.

### A firm in expansion

The company, with headquarters in Castelldefels and subsidiaries in France and Portugal, is in the process of expanding. In particular, to market Papilocare it has recently signed an agreement with Japanese biotech company Shionogi for its distribution in Italy, and another two this year with pharmaceutical company Mithra, for its sale in Belgium and the Netherlands; and with the Hungarian company Gedeon Richter for its sale in eight Eastern European countries.

#### **SUBSIDIZE BY SOCIAL SECURITY**

Procure Health also manufactures drugs to treat osteoporosis, a disease that thins and weakens bones and affects women more than men. One of them is Micaldeos, the only drug on the market with calcium and a high density of vitamin D, " In the past, it was the other way around," says the company's CEO. This drug is financed by Social Security

Following this line, the company wants to enter to fertility field and studies new developments in arthrosis. In addition, they are talking with other laboratories to sell Papilocare and Libicare in Mexico, Canada, England, Germany and China, "which gives us many options for internationalization.

Now, their goal is to disembark in early 2019 in the United States, "a very powerful market for Papilocare. We have begun the process with the FDA (drug agency) to study its launch," he says. The company, with 85 workers (65 in Spain), expects to close 2018 with a turnover of 10 million.

## GYNECOLOGY AND RHEUMATOLOGY, TWO GROWING BUSINESSES

For Yann Gaslain, Chief Executive Officer of Procure Health, gynecology and rheumatology are two healthcare business units with great growth prospects in the coming years. In the first case, due to the ageing population and the boom in sports (running fever), which can wear out the joints, he points out. And in the second case, because of the search for more natural treatments for women, he adds.



*Illustration 4. Yann Gaslain, CEO of the company.*

"What we know is that the hormone market has dropped by 50% in recent years, and this may also explain the increase in Procure sales those years and last one. There is a market need," he argues.

Gaslain, who also has experience in the field of female sexuality due to his time at Procter & Gamble, remembers that 10 years ago, while he was at the multinational, they launched the first Viagra for menopausal women, which was a testosterone patch and due to the hormonal risks, the product was a failure.

"With Libicare, gynecologists say we finally have something. The subject is no longer taboo. Before, the patient did not express it; the doctor had to ask the question, but now the woman deals with it naturally.

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