

# Type 1 diabetes: UK researchers trial vaccine with Australian support.....

Researchers at Cardiff University (UK) are taking part in a clinical trial of a new vaccine to tackle type 1 diabetes.

They believe a vaccine can slow or stop the disease's development and recently-diagnosed adult volunteers are taking part in the trial.

Diabetes affects 366 million people in the world with type 1 rising, especially in young children.

Type 1 diabetes occurs when the immune system attacks the body's own insulin-making cells.

The resulting lack of insulin is life-threatening unless treated with replacement therapy.

Unlike type 2 diabetes, type 1 is not linked to obesity or lifestyle. Genes do appear to play a role.

Colin Dayan, professor of clinical diabetes and metabolism at Cardiff, who is leading the trial said: "We believe that this immune-based therapy can slow or stop the body from damaging its own insulin-making cells in the pancreas.

"Research to date shows that the treatment is safe, but we are in the early days and need to learn more about how it works in people with newly diagnosed Type 1 diabetes.

"If effective, we can develop further treatments for individuals who are at risk of developing this type of diabetes later in life."

The Cardiff University team is working with King's College London on the trial with type 1 diabetes charity JDRF and the Australian Health and Medical Research Council.

Mark Peakman, professor of clinical immunology at King's, has developed the vaccine approach.

"In my laboratory we spent many years gaining a better understanding of what goes wrong with the balance of the immune system in patients developing Type 1 diabetes," he said.

"We eventually hit upon the idea that we could try to revert the damaging response by inducing a protective one; so it's a vaccine with a difference."

Prof Dayan added: "Our ultimate hope is to find a cure for type 1 diabetes. We need to offer all people with diabetes the opportunity to participate in research.

"Information from the trial combined with further studies building on this could improve quality of life and long-term health and benefit for children and adults with type 1 diabetes and future generations."

The DRF wishes researchers at Cardiff University all the best in their research efforts. It is research like this that has the potential to make a difference to so many people who live with diabetes.

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