

Australia invests \$5M to find new antibody treatment for COVID-19

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Govt providing \$5 million to Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne



The Australian government is providing \$5 million to researchers at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne to find a new, effective and safe antibody treatment to combat COVID-19.

Antibody-based therapies are widely used to treat several infectious diseases, as well as autoimmune diseases and cancer. Agents to treat and prevent COVID-19 infection are urgently needed antibody-based therapies would block the entry of the virus into cells and stop infection.

The research will be led by Associate Professor Wai-Hong Tham at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, Melbourne and is funded under stage two of the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) – Coronavirus Research Response – 2020 Antiviral Development for COVID-19 Grant Opportunity.

Australia has already approved the use of two COVID-19 treatments, Remdesivir and Sotrovimab, which are currently being used to treat patients with COVID-19 across the country.

Sotrovimab is a new monoclonal antibody for the treatment of people with mild to moderate COVID-19 who are also at a high risk of being hospitalised. It is expected that approximately 10 per cent of people with COVID-19 may have some benefit from Sotrovimab.