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World-first trial by Australia to test efficacy of Strep A and rheumatic heart disease vaccine

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A major milestone for Strep A vaccines in Australia and the world



Australia-based Griffith University's Institute for Glycomics has received a $5 million philanthropic donation from the International Leducq Foundation to further the development of a vaccine to prevent Strep A infection and rheumatic heart disease in a world-first expanded clinical trial.

As part of the research programme, and in collaboration with researchers at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, volunteers will be vaccinated and then given a deliberate Strep A infection to test the vaccine.

The research will lead to Phase II studies where hundreds of volunteers will be vaccinated and followed to test the efficacy of the vaccine in a real-world setting.

There is currently no vaccine available for rheumatic heart disease and Strep A, and natural immunity takes years to develop. Strep A is responsible for rheumatic heart disease and many cases of deadly invasive disease and toxic shock.

In Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people suffer the highest rate of rheumatic heart disease in the world. It is estimated that around 500,000 people die each year as a result of Strep A infection.