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# Lab discovery could help fight deadly cancer

By Gabriella Rogers • Health Reporter | 7:09pm Sep 10, 2020

## New breakthrough in ovarian cancer research



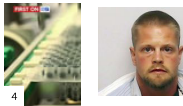
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The fight against ovarian cancer has been given a boost with the help of global investors turning a lab discovery into a promising new treatment.

[Ovarian cancer](#) is the most lethal of all cancers of the female reproductive system, with a five-year survival rate of about 46 per cent.

"Women present quite late with it so you are treating a late stage disease often and the treatments that we currently have are limited," Professor Paul Hertzog, associate director of the [Hudson Institute of Medical Research](#), said.



The fight against ovarian cancer has been given a boost with the help of global investors turning a lab discovery into a promising new treatment. (9News)

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The new therapy is based on a protein in the reproductive tract, which Hudson researchers have been investigating for nearly two decades.

They discovered that the presence of the protein called interferon epsilon can activate immune cells to fight infections, as well as cancer.

"What we have to do is to find essentially an artificial way of making it, close to the form

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Kel Pittman says there needs to be new ways of tackling the disease after she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer at the age of 43. (9News)

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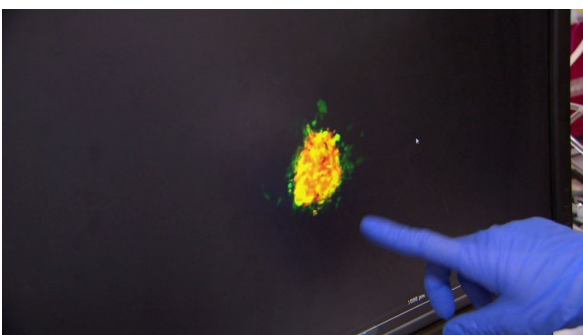
The Institute has joined forces with global investor Morningside Ventures to create a spin-off company called Epsilon Bio to further develop their treatment.

"We don't have the capability within the Hudson to support the research so we need these commercial investors to invest the substantial funds that are required to come up with a new drug," Hudson's chief commercialisation officer Rob Merriel said.

"We want to translate our discovery science into new therapies that can help patients."

The plan is to test a compound in human trials within two years.

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The new therapy is based on a protein in the reproductive tract, which Hudson researchers have been investigating for nearly two decades. (9News)

Kel Pittman says there needs to be new ways of tackling the disease after she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer at the age of 43.

"We need to do something different," Ms Pittman told 9News.

"At the moment there are too many women dying from this disease."

She said better treatments and an early test for ovarian cancer would save many lives.

Unlike breast and cervical cancer which can be picked up [through screening](#), there is no early detection test for ovarian cancer.

"It wasn't until my tummy bloated to the point that I looked seven months pregnant that we actually knew something was wrong," she said.

More information on the signs and symptoms of the disease can be found [here](#).

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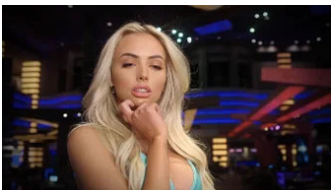
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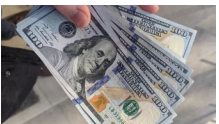
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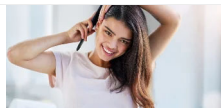
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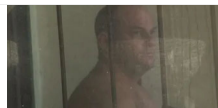




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