

New knowledge about treating multiple sclerosis

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(Medical Xpress)—A study carried out at Victoria, and recently published online in the international scientific journal *PLOS ONE*, holds promise for patients suffering from secondary progressive MS, an advanced form of the disease, which causes nerve degeneration leading to impaired vision and coordination, and eventually, paralysis.

The study focused on understanding how a new MS drug, MIS416, developed by the New Zealand biotech company Innate Immunotherapeutics, is able to help [patients](#) with secondary progressive MS, a form of MS with few effective treatments.

The team of scientists includes Dr Anne La Flamme, an Associate Professor in Victoria's School of Biological Sciences and head of the MS Research Programme at the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research, PhD student Madeleine White, and Dr Gill Webster from Innate Immunotherapeutics.

"We know this drug works, but we are not sure why. This study has helped us understand the pathways that are driving the disease and how the medication alters the immune system, giving us a better idea of why MIS416 works as well as insight into how to treat patients and predict who will do better on this sort of medication," says Dr La Flamme.

Most people believe MS revolves around T cells, says Dr La Flamme, but the Victoria study reveals that targeting other cells in the central nervous system can significantly reduce advanced forms of MS.

More information: White M, Webster G, O'Sullivan D, Stone S, La Flamme AC (2014) Targeting Innate Receptors with MIS416 Reshapes Th Responses and Suppresses CNS Disease in a Mouse Model of Multiple Sclerosis. *PLoS ONE* 9(1): e87712. [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0087712](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0087712)

Provided by Victoria University

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