

FluChip technology licensed to combat deadly flu virus

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InDevR, a small biotech company in Boulder, CO, announced today that they have licensed the FluChip technology from the University of Colorado. The FluChip was invented by a joint team of scientists at the University of Colorado and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in an NIH sponsored effort led by Professor Kathy Rowlen.

Rowlen, now the CEO of InDevR, said that InDevR has arranged to test [genetic material](#) from the recent swine H1N1 virus on the MChip as well as other versions of the FluChip which are under development.

According to Rowlen "Based on work we conducted a couple of years ago, it appears that the M-gene version of the FluChip will be able to distinguish human H1N1 viruses from the new swine H1N1 virus. If that proves to be the case, the FluChip will be a much needed and powerful new tool for surveillance since all of the current influenza diagnostics on the market are unable to subtype this virus."

The most popular diagnostic tests for influenza include rapid immunoassays, which are only able to identify the type (A or B) of influenza virus, and reverse-transcriptase polymerase chain reaction assays, which were designed for human-adapted influenza viruses and are not able to identify the swine H1N1 subtype. State Public Health Laboratories must now send any influenza A viruses that cannot be subtyped using existing diagnostics to the CDC for analysis by genome sequencing or viral isolation.

The CDC must select viruses to analyze since it is not possible to run every sample collected from a large number of Public Health Labs.

The M-gene based FluChip has been demonstrated to delineate human-adapted viruses from non-human [viruses](#), such as the H1N1 virus that caused the 1918 "Spanish Flu". "Since the FluChip assay can be conducted within a single day it could be employed in State [Public Health](#) Laboratories to greatly enhance [influenza](#) surveillance and our ability to track the virus," Rowlen said.

InDevR will combine the FluChip technology with an innovative detection technology (NESATM), which InDevR also licensed from the University of Colorado and further developed with NIH sponsorship, to make the FluChip assay inexpensive and easy to use in any lab that has basic PCR capabilities.

"Kathy and her team have been engaged with this and similar diagnostic technology for many years," said Mary Tapolsky, Senior Licensing Manager at the University of Colorado Technology Transfer Office. "CU TTO is excited about this experienced and motivated group developing and commercializing this promising technology."

Source: University of Colorado at Boulder ([news](#) : [web](#))

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