

Aussie of the Year announces new vaccine trial

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The technology used in the world's first cervical cancer vaccine will be tweaked to fight the most common sexually transmitted disease, genital warts.

Australian of the Year and University of Queensland (UQ) cervical cancer vaccine creator [Professor Ian Frazer](#) launched a therapeutic vaccine trial for genital warts today (Tuesday, February 7).

Patients from Brisbane and China will take part in the joint project for UQ's cancer research centre, the [Centre for Immunology and Cancer Research \(CICR\)](#) and the hospital's sexual health service, Princess Alexandra Sexual Health (PASH).

Professor Frazer said the vaccine used virus-like particles to deliver an antigen (protein that produces immunity) for genital warts similar to the cervical cancer vaccine.

"It will target the main causes of visible genital warts which are human papillomavirus (HPV6) and (HPV11)," Dr Frazer said.

A pilot study of vaccine CICRVAX6 by UQ's Chinese research partner, Wenzhou Medical College, showed the vaccine was potentially effective at treating genital warts in humans.

Now PASH is running a larger trial and needs 120 men and 120 women who have recurring genital warts.

Participants must be aged between 18 and 65 years, should not be pregnant or immunosuppressed and will be required for seven medical visits, with their travel costs refunded.

Trial Manager and PASH Senior Medical Officer Dr David Jardine said patients would receive standard treatment for genital warts and two vaccine shots, which are saline solutions injected in the upper arm, over two months.

"The incentives for people are that they get free consultations, free treatment, free vaccines and their travelling expenses paid," Dr Jardine said.

He said conventional wart treatments of freezing, burning or painting visible warts with acid might not switch off the active infection.

The 18-month trial will be launched in conjunction with *Wartfest*, an annual expo about new developments and treatments for warts, HPV and cancer, featuring expert speakers from Australia and Canada.

Genital warts are transmitted by skin contact and the 2003 Australian Study of Sex and Relationships of 20,000 adults revealed four percent of people had had visible genital warts.

Professor Frazer said developing a preventative warts vaccine or a combined vaccine for cervical cancer and genital warts was one of the next steps if the therapeutic trial was successful.

The trial nurse can be reached on 3240 5881 or 0404 826 525.

For more details about *Wartfest*, visit: <http://www.cicr.uq.edu.au/>

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