

Man-made proteins put a new twist on evolution – and they fight the flu

Man-made proteins. You may have never heard of them, but you will. They are set to become huge change agents in the high-tech world of the very near future. Some of you may have already heard the recent news that doctors believe they can use these compounds to help [fight the flu](#). The major media was all over this angle. And no doubt, it's an important advance. In the U.S. alone, 200,000 people get so sick from the flu they have to go to the hospital each year. U.S. health officials say as many as 50,000 people die.

The version of synthetic protein that can help boost your immune system to fight the flu is called **EP67**. Earlier this month, a team from San Diego State University and the University of Nebraska Medical Center tested the substance on mice – with great results. In a paper that ran in the journal [PLoS One](#), they said mice given a lethal dose of the flu survived after getting an injection of the protein. What's more, it could be used to guard against other diseases, as well.

“Since EP67 works by stimulating local innate immunity, it should prove effective against viral, bacterial and fungal diseases,” said Joy Phillips, the study's lead author. She noted said they still need to test the protein on larger mammals and humans. There is a catch – you have to get a dose of EP67 within 24 hours of exposure to the bug for it to be effective. Still, clearly, synthetic proteins could have a huge impact on public health.

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