

Media Coverage

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\$2m boost for milk muscle trial

THE Victorian Government is to invest \$2 million to help Victorian scientists run clinical trials on a milk protein, said to build muscles.

The funding will take the Victorian discovery of a bioactive milk protein, which has the potential to treat metabolic syndrome and chronic muscular and bone diseases, to clinical trials in people and into the marketplace.

The investment was revealed by Minister for Innovation Gavin Jennings at the 2009 Ausbiotech conference in Melbourne today.

The project is one of 10 health projects to be funded through the newly established \$41-million Victorian Science Agenda Investment Fund.

The discovery that milk contained a protein, Regeneration Inducing Peptide for Tissues and Cells (RIPTAC), was made by researchers from MG Nutritionals (a division of Murray Goulburn Co-operative Co Ltd) and Victoria's Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

The compound, when given daily to mice, caused them not only to build more muscle but also want to exercise.

The findings also showed an increase in muscle in mice not given exercise.

Now a team led by research scientists from Australia's largest dairy company, Murray Goulburn Co-op, with partners in the DPI, Deakin University, Barwon Health, University of South Australia and the Geoffrey Gardiner Dairy Foundation will develop and test the product on people before commercialisation.

If successful, the project would be a genuine coup for public health, achieve annual revenues of \$220 million by 2019, and significantly improve the quality of life of the ageing, Mr Jennings said.

Those who stood to benefit from this product included the about 4.8 million Australians at risk of age-related deterioration of lean body mass and people with metabolic syndrome who were at significantly increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

With an estimated burden of more than \$2.5 billion annually, diseases including osteoporosis, sarcopenia and metabolic syndrome significantly reduced the quality of life of sufferers, he said.

No effective long-term treatment solutions existed for sufferers of these diseases today. <!--[if !supportLineBreakNewLine]-->