

## Utica doctor finds new treatment for heart disease

by Indigo Matthews | Oct 13, 2022 | Syracuse | 0 comments

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Masonic Medical Research Institute researchers are currently studying a gene in order to find out if it affects heart disease. The gene, VGLL4, is essential for embryo development but not for the growth of layers of heart muscle.

Researchers are closer to understanding heart disease and treating it.

Dr. Zhiqiang Ly was born in China, moved to Boston and came to Utica about four years ago to perform cardiovascular research at Masonic Medical Research Institute.

“When I was a Ph.D. student I wanted to do some research that really improved the **health** of people, and one of the leading causes of death is heart disease,” said Lin.

Lin and his team studied a gene in mice in order to understand its role in tissue growth. They discovered that the gene is needed for embryo growth, but not for the development of muscle tissue in the heart.

“Basically, we made two mouse models. The mouse dies very quickly if the gene is knocked out of the entire body. However, if it’s only in the heart muscle cells, the mouse is perfectly fine.

“This is the normal. This is the knockout. That’s the just-born. It’s smaller than this. This is the result five days later. Lin said that the knockout could not grow.

Researchers are learning more about molecular mechanisms that control heart development. This gives them a better understanding and information that can be used to diagnose and treat the diseases and malformations. Lin said that the next step will be to determine if the gene is beneficial to the heart while it experiences stress.

“We already have some data, some very interesting data. So we want to move forward with that and see if we can manipulate the gene’s expression in the heart muscle cells, and then from there to protect the heart from a heart attack,” said Lin.

The hope is to learn more and invent drugs to see if they can change the gene’s expression in a heart attack

condition, and save heart muscle cells.

“It’s very exciting to see what this gene is doing in the heart, and it will be more exciting to see if we can manipulate this gene expression in the heart muscle cells and then save the heart,” said Lin.

To continue their pioneering work, the institute is looking for more scientists and administrative personnel.

Lin and his team published a paper based on their study. The Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute posted it online.

[Source link](#)



**Indigo Matthews**

Indigo Matthews is the editor and primary journalist for Syracuse News Today. Indigo focuses on current local news.

**Syracuse Weather**

Syracuse New York

December 7, 2022, 10:17 am

**MOSTLY CLOUDY**

**48°F**



**2 mph**

Real Feel: 49°F

Humidity: 96%

Wind Speed: 2 Mph ESE

Sunrise: 7:22 Am

Sunset: 4:30 Pm

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**Forecast December 7, 2022**

Day Showers

Night Dreary (overcast)

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52°F

39°F

wind speed: 4 mph W

wind speed: 7 mph

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