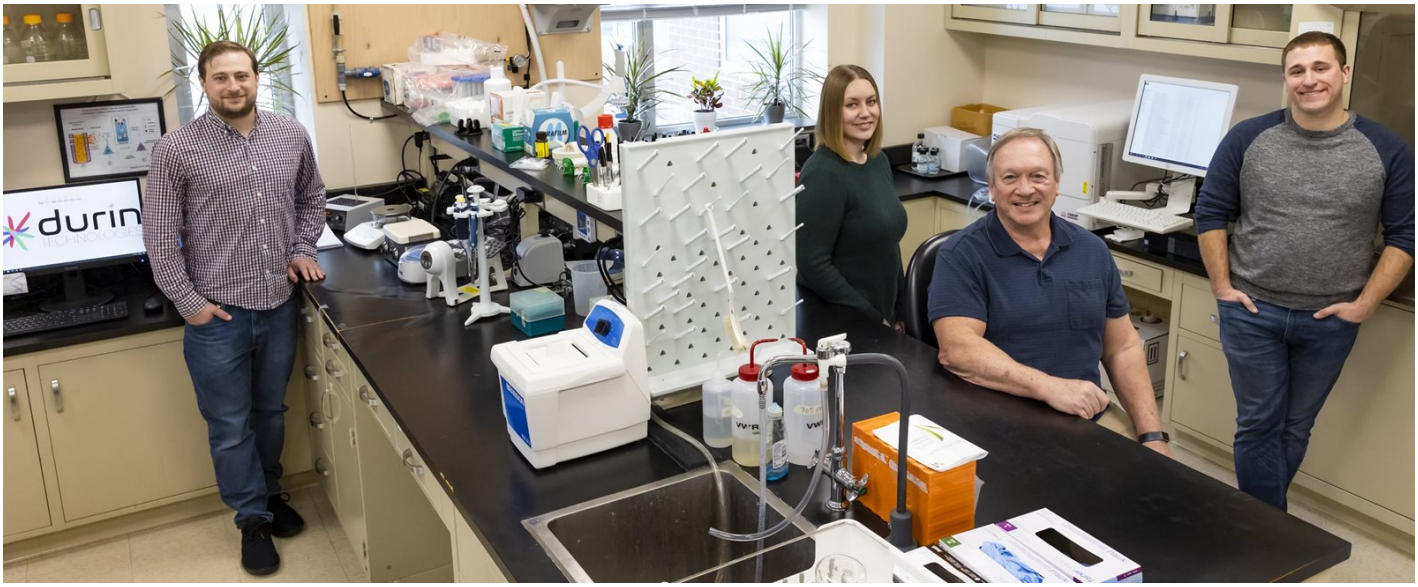
Blood Test Helps With Early Diagnosis Of Alzheimer's Disease

Rowan University



Rowan University researchers have invented a blood test to aid in the early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease (AD) based on detection of disease-specific autoantibodies as blood-based biomarkers. Thus far, there are no blood-based diagnostic tests for early-stage AD approved by the FDA.

The goal of the test is to screen for the presence of AD-related pathological changes in the brain of patients that arrive in their doctor's office with a cognitive or memory complaint, and to properly direct these patients for follow-up testing that can lead to a definitive diagnosis of AD. Early detection and diagnosis allows early treatment, and early treatment greatly increases the likelihood of a successful therapeutic outcome. In addition, it would allow early enrollment into clinical trials seeking new treatments for AD and facilitate monitoring of disease progression in patients by their physicians, including those participating as subjects in clinical trials.

Currently, detection and diagnosis of early-stage AD is difficult and often inconclusive even after using expensive neuropsychological evaluations and state-of-the-art brain imaging techniques. This new, unique blood-based test is based on detecting increased levels of a specific set of self-reactive antibodies (autoantibodies) in the blood that are there to clear away debris generated by ongoing AD-related pathological changes in the brain.

This new test uses a single drop of blood to detect these disease-associated autoantibodies which serve as blood-based biomarkers for early detection of AD. This platform is now being developed for detection of multiple diseases.

The Rowan University Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC) in Glassboro, NJ, licensed a portfolio of technologies in the neurodegenerative disease sector (including the patent underlying this test) to a startup, Durin Technologies, founded by Robert G. Nagele, PhD, Professor of Geriatrics at Rowan. The OTC has helped Durin secure

regional and national venture funding and identify the latest round of financing. Durin has managed to raise significant investment from different sources and is currently moving forward with its platform technology in seeking FDA approval for further blood-based tests for AD, Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis using autoantibodies as biomarkers.

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