BioSpectrum
the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

Singapore researchers discover new treatment for malaria

October 8, 2018 | News

The team has discovered a new molecular pathway and various compounds that could boost human immune cells' ability to identify and attack malaria-infected red blood cells (iRBCs).



A team of scientists from **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)**, **Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART)** and **Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore)** has discovered a potential treatment that could be effective against severe malaria and even drug-resistant malaria.

The team has discovered a new molecular pathway and various compounds that could boost human immune cells' ability to identify and attack malaria-infected red blood cells (iRBCs). This could improve an infected patient's chances of recovery and lower the risk that they develop a more serious infection, which could lead to organ failure.

The researchers have focused their study of Natural Killer cells which are the first-line-of-defence cells during the initial phase of an infection by the malaria parasite.

According to the researchers, with no viable vaccine for malaria in sight, coupled with increasing loss of efficacy in antimalarial drugs and prophylaxis as anti-malarial drug resistance, making this breakthrough discovery will open up new avenues for targeted approaches in the fight against malaria.