

Dengue can soon be treated!

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Singapore: Researchers from the University of Queensland in Australia have identified that existing drugs could be repurposed to create a world-first treatment for dengue fever.

The team said that a drug on trial to treat sepsis - a type of blood poisoning - can be better used to combat the mosquito-borne virus as the body's immune mechanism reacts to dengue fever and other bacterial infections in a similar way.

Mr Paul Young, virologist, University of Queensland, said, "The drug blocks leaking blood vessels and we are very confident that it would work effectively with dengue fever."

Dengue causes a debilitating fever and can progress to the potentially fatal dengue haemorrhagic fever and dengue shock syndrome. Southeast Asian countries are the most affected by this blood-borne disease. Nearly 390m people worldwide are infected with the virus each year, resulting in around 25,000 annual deaths.