

Babies' hearts could beat path to new heart attack treatments

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Babies' hearts can repair themselves, prompting UQ researchers to investigate new heart attack treatments.

The seemingly-miraculous power of babies' hearts to repair themselves after being injured has spurred a University of Queensland research team to investigate if this ability can be harnessed for new heart attack treatments.

UQ School of Biomedical Sciences researcher Dr Enzo Porrello is studying the [genetic mechanisms](#) behind how and why baby [heart tissue](#) is able to re-grow when injured.

Dr Porrello said it was little known that the heart [tissue](#) of newborn mammals had the capacity to

regenerate.

"What we have known for decades is that some reptiles and amphibians are able to regenerate whole limbs and body parts if they are injured or severed," Dr Porrello said.

"Newborn infant mammals have some of these regenerative abilities as well, but this is lost soon after birth."

The research is focussed on decoding the complex genetic circuitries behind cardiac regeneration – information that could lead to new treatments for heart attacks.

"Every year more than 55,000 Australians have a heart attack," Dr Porrello said.

"Our research may lead to the development of a drug to trigger genetic messages for the heart to regenerate healthy tissue and help people who have had a [heart attack](#) return to a healthy life."

Provided by University of Queensland

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