Top Scientists Say Ebola Cure Research Should Focus on Survivors' Blood

November 11, 2014

Could the cure for Ebola lie within the blood of those who recovered from the disease? To speed up progress in the search for a cure, that's what a group of prominent scientists, including three Nobel laureates, are proposing to U.S. health officials, politicians and biotech companies, Reuters reports.

The group of scientists includes James Watson, co-discoverer of DNA's double helix, and David Baltimore, a leading expert in the molecular biology of the immune system. The researchers suggest that harnessing antibodies produced by Ebola survivors could be key to developing new treatments and vaccines.

The proposal builds on the recovery of at least four Ebola patients in the United States who received survivors' blood during treatment for the virus.

The technique is based on an approach called "passive immunization" that scientists would use to harness a variety of survivors' Ebola-fighting antibodies and combine them into multi-drug cocktails. (This technique is comparable to the approach currently used to treat HIV/AIDS.)

This method differs from current Ebola research in the United States, which focuses on finding a single molecule to defeat the disease. European researchers said they plan to test the "survivor serum" method in patients starting this month.

So far, U.S. health departments and biotech companies have declined to comment on the report.

For more information about the Ebola cure research happening stateside, click here.

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