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Australia Health

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It takes women seven years to be diagnosed with endometriosis. That could soon change

9News Staff

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ENDOMETRIOSIS BREAKTHROUGH
FIRST NEW TREATMENT OPTION IN OVER 13 YEARS

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Ella Collings shares the realities of endometriosis1 / 20

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Australian researchers have developed an "exciting" new blood test which could help diagnose women who have early-stage [endometriosis](#).

The breakthrough was developed by Perth-based medical technology company Proteomics International and [published last week](#) in the international medical journal *Human Reproduction*.

"This breakthrough is an exciting advance in the diagnosis of this debilitating disease," Professor Peter Rogers, research director at the Royal Women's Hospital and professor of women's health research at the University of Melbourne said.

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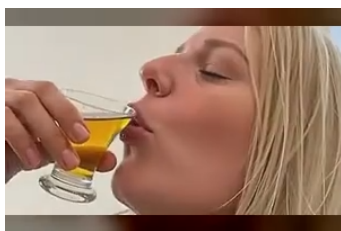


Endometriosis can cause severe pelvic pain, painful periods, and infertility. *iStock*

"Currently, it takes on average seven years for a woman to receive a diagnosis and during that time she is enduring significant life-impacting symptoms, her years of fertility are reducing and the endometriosis is spreading.

"These results are a significant step towards solving the critical need for a non-invasive, accurate test that can diagnose endometriosis at an early stage as well as when it is more advanced."

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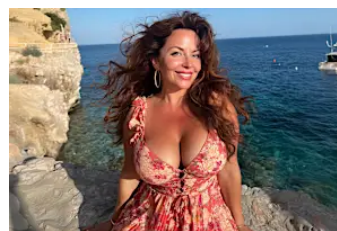
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Scientists from Proteomics International, in collaboration with researchers from the Royal Women's Hospital and the University of Melbourne, analysed plasma samples from a study of 805 participants across two independent groups.

Proteomics International's managing director Dr Richard Lipscombe said the blood test showed excellent results in distinguishing between healthy people and those who are symptomatic for the disease from those who actually have early stages of endometriosis.

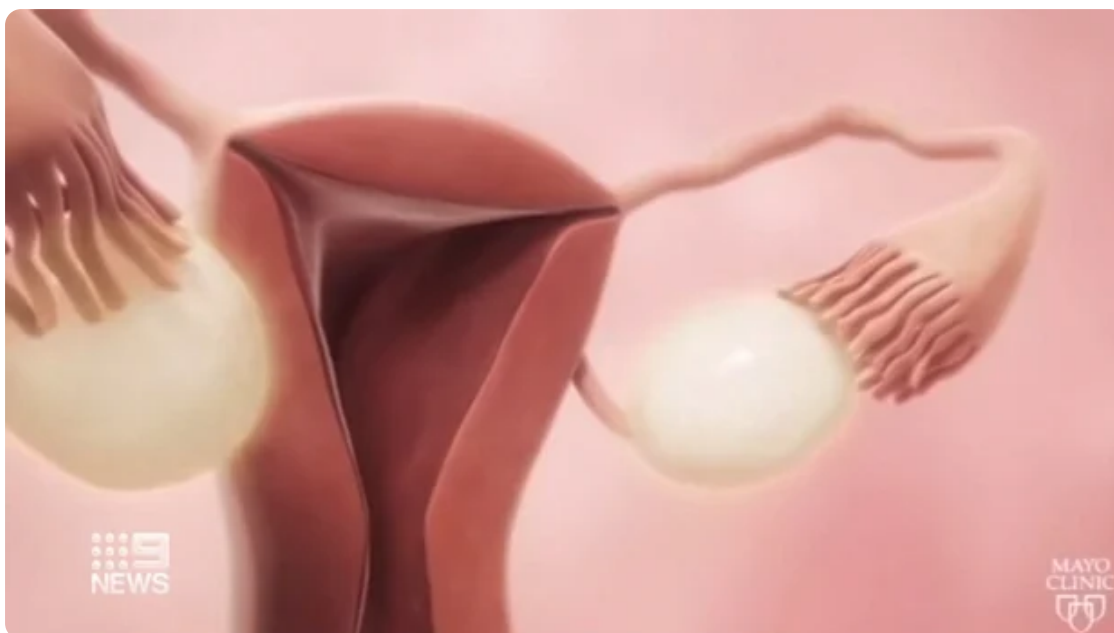
"We identified 10 protein biomarkers, or 'fingerprints' in the blood, that can be found using our test, in women and girls with endometriosis," he said.

"The blood test, called PromarkerEndo, could significantly reduce the cost and the amount of time typically spent on trying to solve the cause of symptoms suffered by women and girls over years, often from as early as when they start having periods.

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"A blood test is more cost-effective for patients and the health system than the current use of ultrasounds, invasive laparoscopies, MRIs and biopsies to diagnose endometriosis, and work is underway to fortify the robustness and reliability of the new test for clinical use."

READ MORE: [Women with endometriosis at four times the risk of deadly cancer](#)



Endometriosis causes chronic pain, infertility and fatigue from lesions growing outside the uterus. *Nine*

Endometriosis affects one in nine women and girls in Australia and occurs when tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows in other parts of the body where it does not belong.

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The disease can cause severe pelvic pain, painful periods, and infertility.

It is estimated endometriosis costs Australia \$9.7 billion each year, according to Endometriosis Australia, with 70 per cent of women with the disease needing to take time off work to manage their symptoms.

While there is currently no known cure for endometriosis, and treatment is usually aimed at controlling symptoms, Rogers said access to early diagnosis and effective treatment of endometriosis was important.

"Detecting endometriosis at an early stage increases treatment options and may improve a patient's response to laser ablation or the

medical therapies currently used," he said.

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"Among healthy women undergoing fertility treatments there is a three-fold increased incidence of endometriosis."

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