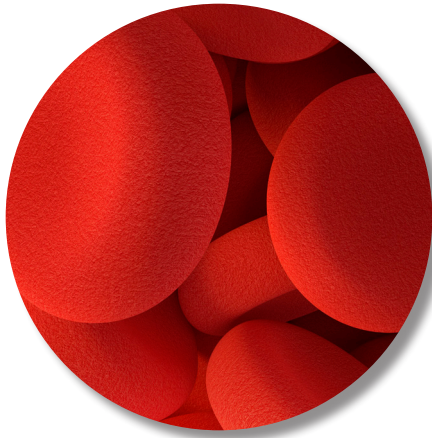




25 Breakthroughs in Georgia



NO. 17:

A drug that makes the bleeding stop

For most people, a bruise is no big deal. But for hemophilia patients, a bruise can bring internal bleeding that won't stop on its own. And deep cuts or flesh wounds pose even greater danger.

A new drug called Obizur can help. Invented by Emory hematologist Dr. Pete Lollar and approved by the FDA in 2014, Obizur helps the blood to clot for patients with acquired hemophilia A (AHA).

These patients lack what's known as clotting factor VIII, an essential protein that allows the blood to coagulate after an injury. The absence of factor VIII stems from the immune system attacking factor VIII molecules in people with AHA.

That's where Obizur comes in.

While conducting basic research on the clotting process, Dr. Lollar and colleagues made an intriguing discovery. Pigs also have the clotting factor VIII protein, similar to that in humans. But they found that human antibodies sensitized to recognize and attack factor VIII failed to react to porcine factor VIII.

So Dr. Lollar and his team developed a modified form of porcine factor VIII that could skate past the sensitized immune systems of hemophilia A patients – and make the bleeding stop.

Now marketed as Obizur by Baxalta, Inc., the drug born of an Emory lab is expanding its reach. Earlier this year it was approved for treatment of acquired hemophilia A patients in Canada and the European Union.

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