

Resource

# Development of a new diagnostic for seronegative RA

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Researchers in Italy are developing a new diagnostic for people that may have RA but test negative on the test that is in use now. This new test uses a simple blood sample, and if it becomes available it could offer a much-needed solution for diagnosis of RA, potentially shortening the time for seronegative patients to receive a diagnosis.

Plant-molecular farming: using the power of plants

Traditionally, diagnostics and medicines are produced using chemical or biotechnological processes that use mammalian cells or bacteria. However, the new RA test was developed using plants. Scientists have been exploring how to modify plant cells to produce medical products; this process is called plant-molecular-farming, or PMF. PMF is opening up possibilities for discovering new types of medical innovations that haven't been possible using existing methods. As well as offering new possibilities, this technology is potentially controversial, as it involves engineering plants.

The Pharma-Factory project

Research to advance this test is supported by the European Commission Horizon 2020 Pharma-Factory project<sup>1</sup>. Pharma-Factory involves 5 companies, 6 universities and 3 public research institutions across Europe, all focused on development of different medical innovations using PMF.

In Pharma-Factory we are not just interested in advancing the science of PMF. We are also hoping to understand what PMF means for patients, and ensure research and the resulting products remain relevant to patients and medical providers. We would like to know what you see as the value of PMF

products and what your concerns are. We need people like you to support our work to understand how new tests can help improve the quality of life for individuals living with RA.

Would you like to get involved?

We are looking for the views of men with RA to assist in advancing the new diagnostic test. Participants will take part in one-on-one interviews, via videoconferencing or telephone, to discuss their experiences of diagnosis of RA, and how this process has affected them specifically. The interview will take approximately 1 hour and participation will be confidential. Participants will be offered a £30 Amazon voucher.

For more information and to get involved with our work please contact:

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Visit [www.pharmafactory.org](http://www.pharmafactory.org) for more information.

Please take your time to read the [participant information sheet](#) before deciding if you'd like to take part.

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