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Tarantula venom could help treat muscular dystrophy

ANI

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WASHINGTON: Tarantulas—the big, hairy and to many people very scary spiders—could actually help people suffering from muscular dystrophy, say scientists at University of Buffalo.

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Biophysicists have found a protein in tarantula venom that shows promise as a potential therapy for MD, which is a group of inherited muscle diseases.

Fredrick Sachs, a professor of physiology and biophysics at the University at Buffalo, and his colleagues discovered the peptide, called GsMTx4.

The researchers extensively tested the effect of GsMTx4 on mice with muscular dystrophy and found the drug increased muscle strength and caused no deaths or toxicity, reports Fox News.

Sachs said the peptide also has potential therapy for several other conditions, such as neuropathic pain and atrial fibrillation.

Hoping to advance the drug to clinical trials, the researchers have formed a biotech company in Buffalo, NY called Rose Pharmaceuticals.

Currently, there's no cure for muscular dystrophy, but medications and therapy can help slow the course of the disease.

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