



When it comes to research, Dr. Rachel Roper has more fun than a barrel full of monkeypox. Well, almost. It's actually stopping the spread of monkeypox that would please Roper the most. A microbiologist at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, Roper has taken an innovative approach to researching ways to stop poxvirus by removing a specific gene that affects immunity. Her approach promises not only to improve the safety and effectiveness of poxvirus vaccines, but also to kill other viruses such as coronaviruses, which include the human severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) virus. Roper has already made strides by removing a specific target gene called A35R, which seems to inhibit immune responses in mammals. With the help of a NC Biotechnology Center Biotechnology Research Grant, Roper is pursuing her hypothesis that removing the A35R gene from poxvirus vaccines will make vaccines safer and more effective against such threats as monkeypox.

Source:

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/news/poe/2008/1108/roper.cfm>



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DR. RACHEL ROPER