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## Can the cells on the side fix it?

Dr L Jorge Gonez – Bernard O'Brien Institute of Microsurgery

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease in which T cells destroy the insulin producing cells in the islets of the pancreas, leading to diabetes. Dr Gonez said “Curing type 1 diabetes requires either the replacement or regeneration of insulin-producing cells, together with treatment to prevent their destruction”

Dr. Gonez and his team have shown that a side population of cells found in the pancreas can be changed into insulin, glucagon and somatostatin positive cells after ***implantation into unique, vascularised tissue engineering chambers***. These cells may provide a new therapeutic approach for the treatment of type 1 diabetes.

*“Curing type 1 diabetes would save lives, alleviate considerable suffering that is particularly experience by children and substantially reduce the cost of health care”*

Insulin-dependent or type 1 diabetes affects an estimated 200 million people worldwide.  
There are now over **100,000 Australians** with type 1 diabetes.

Abstract available - Interview opportunities

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