

UNR research leads to AIDS treatment

By Michael Martinez, Reno Gazette-Journal

He has been doggedly pursuing the mysteries of a single organism, one that causes deadly fungal meningitis, since he was an undergraduate at the University of Iowa in the 1960s.

But the research by microbiology professor Tom Kozel of the University of Nevada, Reno has earned a satisfying dividend: a new, rapid blood test that could lead to early diagnosis and potentially save the lives of thousands of people stricken with fungal meningitis, a leading cause of AIDS-related deaths in developing countries that is close going to market.

"It's great when something you do helps people," Kozel said Wednesday after walking visitors through his lab in the Center for Molecular Medicine.

He discussed the antibody that would make testing people in emerging countries, where there are limited medical facilities, more practical.

Normally it takes a spinal tap to extract fluid and lab analysis to detect fungal meningitis or cryptococcus.

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