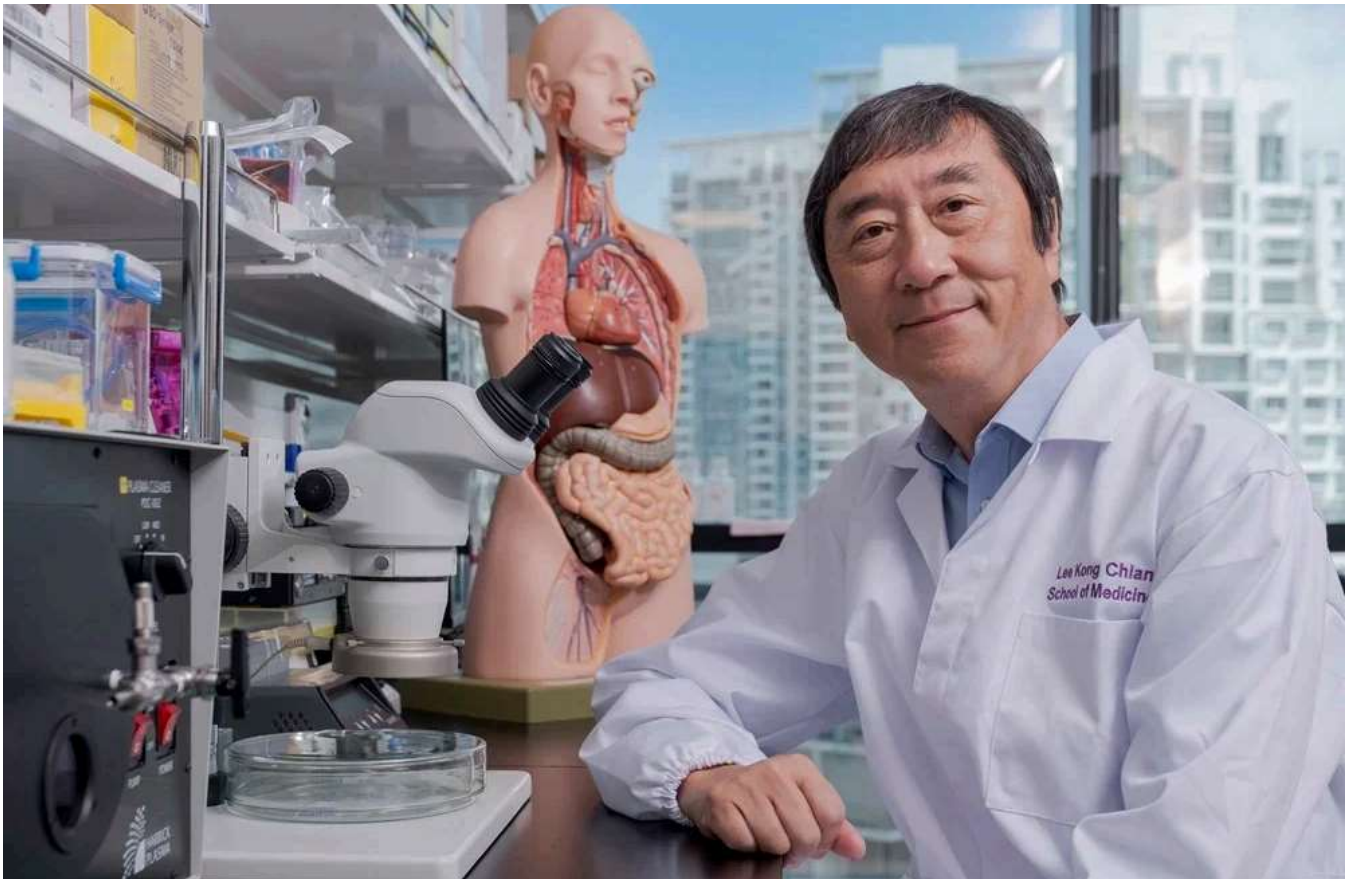


Study: Common bacteria linked to Stomach Cancer

New research led by Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Singapore and the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) reveals the role of Streptococcus anginosus bacteria in stomach cancer, shedding light on preventive strategies.

BY NGOZI EZE – MARCH 24, 2024



Professor Joseph Sung, NTU Singapore's Senior Vice President (Health and Life Sciences) and Dean of the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, is the co-lead of the study which found that Streptococcus anginosus bacteria play a significant role in causing stomach cancer. | NTU Singapore

Streptococcus anginosus, a bacteria commonly found in the body, has been identified as a significant contributor to stomach cancer, according to a study led by NTU Singapore and CUHK.

The research highlights the importance of early detection and preventive measures in combating this deadly disease.

Researchers found that *S. anginosus*, typically harmless in healthy individuals, can trigger gastric inflammation and promote the growth of cancerous cells in the stomach lining.

Professor Joseph Sung, NTU Singapore's Senior Vice President (Health and Life Sciences) and co-lead of the study, underscores the importance of understanding the bacteria's impact on human health.

"Our latest findings shed light on the previously overlooked role of *Streptococcus anginosus* in stomach cancer development," said Professor Sung. "This discovery underscores the urgency of preventive measures and targeted interventions to reduce the burden of this disease."

Key insights from the study

In experiments on mice, scientists observed that *S. anginosus* infections led to gastric inflammation and abnormal cell changes associated with early-stage cancer.

The bacteria were also found to accelerate the growth of stomach tumors, highlighting their potential as a therapeutic target.

Disrupting a specific protein on the bacteria's surface impaired their ability to promote cancerous cell growth, suggesting new avenues for treatment.

Professor Sung emphasized the importance of early detection and preventive measures in combating stomach cancer.

"Detecting *S. anginosus* in faeces could serve as an early warning sign, allowing for targeted interventions and improved patient outcomes," he said. "Maintaining good oral hygiene practices may also help reduce the risk of bacterial transmission to the stomach."

As the study marks a significant advancement in understanding the complex origins of stomach cancer, future research will focus on developing targeted treatments and preventive strategies. Professor Sung highlighted the need for continued collaboration and innovation to address this prevalent yet often overlooked disease.