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## **UNMC bandage may save lives**

By Michael O'Connor

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Minutes matter when a person suffers a wound, whether it's from a bullet on the battlefield or from a car accident on a city street.

University of Nebraska scientists are developing a fast-acting liquid bandage that the researchers say could save lives.

Dr. Mark Carlson, an associate professor of surgery at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, gave a presentation on the research Thursday at UNMC.

The project involves researchers from both UNMC and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The work started more than a decade ago by researchers currently at UNL.

The liquid bandage is being tested on animals and possibly could be tested on humans within several years, Carlson said. He estimated that it might be five to 10 years before the bandage could be available for commercial use.

The liquid consists of human clotting proteins and microscopic pieces of synthetic mesh. The liquid can be put on the wound with a syringe or can be sprayed on.

The liquid bandage is more effective at stopping bleeding than standard cotton gauze bandages and could be particularly useful on the battlefield, Carlson said.

A wound sealant that is similar to the liquid bandage has been used in operating rooms for years, Carlson said. But the liquid bandage would be less expensive and more versatile than the sealant.

The research project is funded with a \$5.2 million congressional earmark sponsored by U.S. Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb. The practice of earmarking has come under fire in recent years amid congressional corruption scandals and criticisms that earmarks promote wasteful spending.

Nelson attended the presentation and spoke following Carlson's remarks. While there have been abuses of earmarking, those cases are the exception, Nelson said.

He said bandage research is a good example of the value of earmarking. He said the research fulfills important goals of saving the lives of military personnel and boosting quality research at an important state institution.

Contact the writer:

444-1122, michael.oconnor@owh.com

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