

CREATION MOMENTS

Proclaiming Evidence for Truth

THIS WEEK'S CREATION MOMENT

Medical Light on Gene Research



Read Mark 2:17

Fireflies may help light the way to new medical breakthroughs. The gentle glow of a firefly on a summer evening is produced by the chemical luciferase. The firefly has a gene with the code that makes this chemical. When that gene is added to the genetic information of other plants or animals, the cells begin to glow harmlessly. Researchers have been using the firefly gene to test their ability to add genetic information to a cell.

When human heart arteries become clogged, a medicine called TPA is among the treatments doctors use. TPA is a natural clot-dissolving protein that helps prevent heart attacks. The problem is, without a continuous supply of TPA, the artery may relog. It would help if the artery could make its own TPA 24 hours a day.

Since TPA is a natural protein for which there is a genetic code, researchers wanted to know if genetic information could be added to artery cells. To find out, they injected dogs with the genetic code for luciferase. If genetic information could be added to the cells through this method, they would actually see the results in the glowing tissue. Tissue samples taken three days later did, in fact, have the distinctive glow of the firefly, proving that the method works. They warn that several years of research lie ahead before artery cells may be able to dissolve their own clots.

Those glowing fireflies that delight children and adults show God's design in the creation in an unexpected way. The chemical that makes the glow is proving to be an important tool of medical science.

Prayer: Lord, I thank You for the blessings of modern medicine. I pray that You would bless researchers who are working to make us healthier. Let the beauty of Your handiwork remind them that they have a Creator to whom they are accountable. Amen.

Notes: "Glowing evidence of gene-altered arteries." *Science News*, v. 139, June 22, 1991. p. 391.

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