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TOP NEWS ▾


 Whole Site ▾ Goog

Home

Biology

Medicine

Technology

Products

News

Definition

Dictionary

Movies

Links

Search

RSS

Navigation Links

Biology News

Medicine News

Biology Products

Medicine Products

Biology Definition

Medicine Definition

Biology Technology

Medicine Technology

Biology Dictionary

Medicine Dictionary

Biology Navigation

HOME >> MEDICINE >> NEWS

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New Wireless System Developed to Detect Esophageal Reflux

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capsule, another wireless system that detects esophageal acids. Both technologies are currently used by UT Southwestern gastroenterologists.

Researchers have already successfully tested the new RFID device to see that it properly identifies simulated stomach acids in a test tube and that the transmitter can send the results through human tissue. The sensor is designed to detect stomach acid, gas and water so doctors can determine whether the presence of those substances coincides with feelings of heartburn, the start of eating or other activities. The next step will involve testing in animal models before the system eventually is tested in humans.

at the system makes it easier to follow normal eating, drinking and activity patterns that may play a part in the acid reflux. Researchers say patients shouldnt feel anything in their throat when the device is inserted thanks to a special plastic material used.

The RFID system is the next step in a growing effort to develop less invasive wireless technologies for gastrointestinal diseases. Those include the PillCam, a small pill-sized wireless camera that takes photos as it goes through the digestive tract, and Bravo

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UT Southwesterns Dr. Tang and Dr. Fred Tibbals, director of the Bioinstrumentation Resources Center, have been working with Dr. Jung-chieh Chiao, associate professor of electrical engineering at UTA, for two years to develop the wireless system. Engineers had to develop the specialized radio frequency implant, which detects and sends the data, as well as the receiver. The receiver will include a button the patient can push when they begin eating. Eventually, engineers hope to design a device similar to a personal digital assistant to store the results. That PDA-like device could then be taken into a doctors office and downloaded into a computer to analyze the results.

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Page: [1](#) [2](#)

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