$1.6 MILLION NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH GRANT

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON • COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
TACKLING A PRESSING WOMEN’S HEALTH ISSUE

Yi Hong, an associate professor in UTA’s Bioengineering Department, is leading an interdisciplinary team that will use a five-year, $1.6 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to develop a new method of treating vaginal prolapse, which could prevent complications and improve the quality of life of thousands of women.

UTA’s Kytai Nguyen, Liping Tang and Jun Liao and UT Southwestern urologist Philippe Zimmern are co-investigators.

Vaginal prolapse affects almost 3 percent of U.S. women, according to the Office on Women’s Health. Hong and his team are developing a bioadhesive that is strong and bioactive to reattach the pelvic floor muscles early, before they detach completely, and stop further tearing while the body repairs the affected muscles.

“It is difficult to repair a full muscle tear, but if a prolapse is detected early, we can glue the two edges together while they are still partially attached and prevent further damage. Because it is bioactive, the adhesive will allow the body to rejuvenate naturally, and there will be far less discomfort for the patient,” Hong said.