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Researchers Make World's First Diabetes Movie

Friday, December 2, 2011
By Peggy Pico

SAN DIEGO — The real-time video will help researchers find better ways to treat and prevent [Type 1 diabetes](#), which typically effects children and young adults.

It's the first time scientists have been able to video document the start and cause of diabetes at a cellular level.

Matthias von Herrath, M.D. is the director of the Diabetes Research Center at the [La Jolla Institute For Allergy & Immunology](#). He and his team made the video.

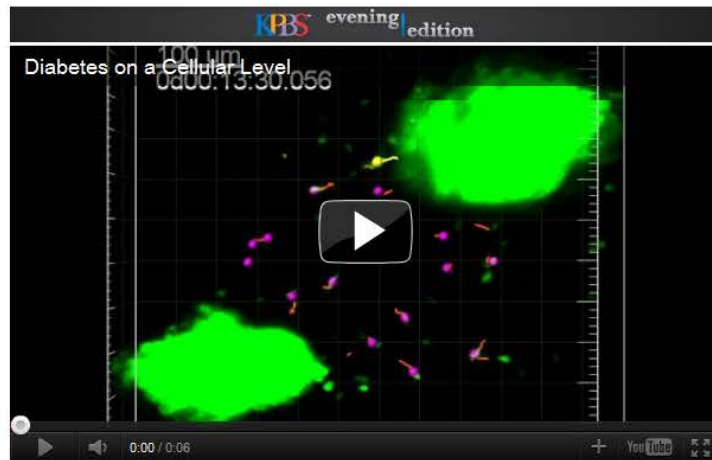
"What we've learned from the video is how the process of diabetes takes place. This is important because now we can look at how to prevent or stop the process in a new way," said von Herrath.

The video shows immune T-cells acting like ants that attack and devour their food. Only the T-cell attacked and destroyed insulin cells inside the pancreas. To capture the video, researchers used a state of the art two-photon microscope placed directly on the pancreas of an anesthetized mouse.

The next step, said von Herrath, is to find a way to keep the immune cells away from the insulin producing cells.

Scientist from around the world have called the video a "technological breakthrough," likely to change the course of diabetes research.

The full video and data was published in the [Journal of Clinical Investigation](#).



Above: This video shows the immune T cells (purple dots) attacking the pancreatic islets (green images in center), which contain the insulin-producing betacells. The attack continues for several hours destroying many beta cells. Credit: La Jolla Institute for Allergy & Immunology.

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