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US scientists develop test for identifying chronic fatigue

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Chronic fatigue currently lacks a standard, reliable diagnostic test



People suffering from a debilitating and often discounted disease known as chronic fatigue syndrome may soon have something they've been seeking for decades: scientific proof of their ailment.

Researchers at the Stanford University School of Medicine have created a blood test that can flag the disease, which currently lacks a standard, reliable diagnostic test.

The test, which is still in a pilot phase, is based on how a person's immune cells respond to stress. With blood samples from 40 people — 20 with chronic fatigue syndrome and 20 without — the test yielded precise results, accurately flagging all chronic fatigue syndrome patients and none of the healthy individuals.

The diagnostic platform could even help identify possible drugs to treat chronic fatigue syndrome. By exposing the participants' blood samples to drug candidates and rerunning the diagnostic test, the scientists could potentially see whether the drug improved the immune cells' response. Already, the team is using the platform to screen for potential drugs they hope can help people with chronic fatigue syndrome down the line.