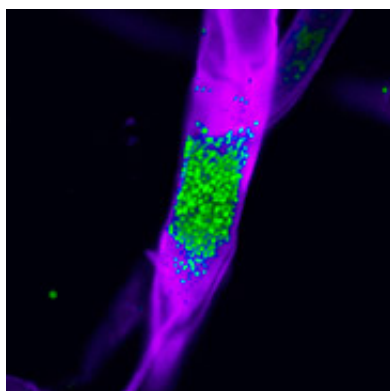


Spider bite leads researchers to new active compound

Sarah Niehs and colleagues investigate a fungal infection and discover a new natural product

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The bite of a spider caused a severe inflammatory response and cost an Australian woman her forearm. Scientists were able to isolate a fungus from the infected forearm tissue of the patient. This tragic infection has now helped a ILRS doctoral researcher Sarah Niehs together with a team led by Christian Hertweck from the Leibniz-HKI find new active compounds, the so-called necroximes. These substances are produced by bacteria that live inside the fungi. The highly effective cytotoxins may provide clues for the development of new cancer drugs. The researchers published their results in the journal *Angewandte Chemie*.

Original publication:

Niehs SP, Dose B, Richter R, Pidot SJ, Dahse H-M, Stinear TP, Hertweck C (2020) Mining symbionts of spider-transmitted fungus illuminates uncharted biosynthetic pathways to cytotoxic benzolactones. *Angewandte Chemie International Edition* <https://doi.org/10.1002/anie.201916007>.