



“Few products have such an effect,” said Charles Doillon about the colostrum extract he tested.

Photo: Marc Robitaille

New hope for injured skin*

Proteins extracted from colostrum could help wounds heal better

By [Jean Hamann](#)

Colostrum—the milk mothers produce in the first few days after giving birth—is already known to aid in the development of a newborn’s immune system. Now, researchers from the Faculty of Medicine at Université Laval have shown that colostrum also contains proteins that help wounds heal better, according to a study whose main findings Charles Doillon presented in Toronto in early June at the 3rd Congress of the World Union of Healing Societies.

Professor Doillon and Renée Paradis of the CHUL Research Centre assessed the effect of a bovine colostrum extract developed by researchers Réjean Drouin, Olivier Moroni, and Christina Juneau of the firm Advitech on certain aspects of the healing process. Known for the time being as Extract IM, the product contains a mix of growth factors—proteins that encourage cell differentiation and multiplication—and antimicrobial proteins. Researchers tested its effects on fibroblasts, cells that synthesize collagen, which plays a key role in wound healing.

Extract IM increased the cellular activity of fibroblasts twentyfold and augmented collagen synthesis. “Tests also showed that the product is not toxic to these cells,” added Charles Doillon. Another interesting finding was that collagen contraction(shrinks) much less when exposed to Extract IM. “This leads us to believe that if we applied the extract to a wound, it could prevent the formation of unsightly scars caused by collagen shrinkage. Few products have such an effect,” he stressed, noting, however, that the findings are only preliminary. It remains to be seen how this natural product, which stimulates the cellular activity of fibroblasts without killing them and encourages collagen synthesis while preventing collagen shrinkage, will behave during subsequent trials.