

# Groundbreaking Discovery of a New Blood Group in Britain Unravels 50-Year Medical Mystery

## Description

### Discovery of a New Blood Group in Britain Solves 50-Year-Old Mystery

**London:** Researchers from the NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) and the University of Bristol have discovered a new and extremely rare blood group, which they have named “MAL.” This breakthrough has solved a 50-year-old enigma surrounding the antigen “ANWJ,” which was first identified in 1972. The discovery holds great promise in improving the treatment and safety of patients with rare blood types.

The lead researcher, Dr. Louise Tilley, and her team spent 20 years on this groundbreaking study. The key to this discovery was the creation of a new diagnostic tool that detects the antigen’s genetic background, which had remained elusive since ANWJ’s discovery. This antigen, located on the surface of red blood cells, was found to be present in varying amounts, making it challenging to diagnose.

Antibodies in our blood plasma detect when a foreign antigen marker is present.

The MAL blood group, which incorporates the ANWJ antigen, becomes the 47th known blood group. While this group is exceedingly rare, the newly developed test will make it easier to identify patients and blood donors with this rare antigen. This development is expected to benefit at least 400 patients globally each year, especially those who require urgent blood transfusions but face complications due to mismatched blood groups.

Researchers believe that this breakthrough will reduce complications in medical treatments for such patients, as early identification of the MAL blood group will ensure proper care. Scientists around the world have been invited to further study and understand this new blood group.

The NHSBT and collaborating laboratories in various countries have already begun implementing this new diagnostic tool, providing hope for patients who face life-threatening complications due to rare blood groups.

Image Credit:

<https://www.sciencealert.com/images/2024/09/HumanRedBloodCellsUnderMicroscopeAndTwoWhiteBloodCells>

## Category

1. Lifestyle

## Tags

1. ANWJ
2. MAL

3. New Blood Group
4. NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT)

**Date Created**

September 22, 2024

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