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Health newsfeed for Wednesday, October 30, 2013

**HEADLINE: FOOTBALL** 

ANCHOR LEAD: CHANGING THE SHAPE OF A PARTICLE CAN IMPROVE ITS CLINICAL UTILITY,

**ELIZABETH TRACEY REPORTS** 

Changing the shape of a laboratory-created molecule to more closely resemble a football rather than a sphere improves its ability to stimulate the immune system, a Johns Hopkins study led by Jordan Green has shown.

GREEN: When biological cells interact together they can have a lot of surface area and contact between the two surfaces, and it's a flatter interface. It can even be like two pancakes touching, a lot of interface. The way everyone was looking at this though was more like two billiard balls that just barely touch each other. So we wanted to see if we changed the shape of the particle would it be more like what a biological cell is, because what we're making these particles, called artificial antigen presenting cells, we try to make them activate the immune system the way a biological cell does. :30

Green says the objective is to construct these molecules to engage the immune system to destroy cancer cells, an approach that seems to be working in the lab. At Johns Hopkins, I'm Elizabeth Tracey.