

High school student finds new protein

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A 16-year-old Glenelg, Md., high school student has received a patent for a protein that reportedly might help fight one of the world's deadliest diseases.

Serena Fasano, a junior at Glenelg High School, told the Baltimore Sun the patent officially is owned by the University of Maryland, but she will be allowed to name it, although she's not allowed to call the protein Serena, or name it after any of her friends. Instead, it will need a scientific name indicating it is a probiotic -- a beneficial protein.

The teenager spent three years researching the protein, part of that time at the University of Maryland's School of Medicine where her father is the director of the Mucosal Biology Research Center, the Sun reported Wednesday.

The protein she discovered -- a component of yogurt -- seems to eradicate E.coli 042, the leading cause of diarrhea that kills 6 million people annually, mostly children in Third World nations.

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