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## tech

### Gecko feet inspire waterproof bandage

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Reuters



Chicago: Scientists have long admired the gecko lizard for its gravity-defying feet. Now US researchers have made a waterproof bandage inspired by the sticky surface of a gecko's paws.

The finding, published on Monday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, could be used in the operating room in surgeries or to repair wounds.

"What we did was to mimic what the gecko does," said Robert Langer, a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who invented a biorubber material for the bandage.

Langer, along with colleague Jeff Karp of Harvard Medical School, used computer technology to sculpt extremely tiny hills and valleys on the surface of the bandage to grip the underlying tissue, thus improving its adhesion.

While different teams have created gecko-inspired glues that could be used in dry environments, the bandage would be suitable for use in wet environments, such as in heart,



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bladder or lung tissue.

Also, being biodegradable, it can be left inside the body.

“There is a big need for a tape-based medical adhesive,” Karp said.

He said such adhesives must stick well when wet without causing undue inflammation or toxic effects. They also must be flexible.

To make it sticky on wet surfaces, Langer and Karp added a thin layer of a sugar-based glue to the tape. In tests, the glue was twice as strong as adhesives with no pattern.


Langer said the bandage could be used to prevent leaks in gastric bypass surgeries or to augment sutures.


“You could also put drugs in these and use them as drug or cell-delivery mechanisms,” he said.



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