

Beltsville spinoff gets boost from MedStar, Cleveland Clinic



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Technology once used to help helicopters fly better will in the future be used to help patients breathe better.

InnoVital Systems, a spinoff of Beltsville defense contractor Techno-Sciences, will pair its experience developing technology for the military with medical research by **MedStar Health** and the **Cleveland Clinic** to [create a new medical device](#). The InVent Diaphragm Assist is an implantable device that can help patients with respiratory illnesses breathe, instead of a ventilator system.

The patent deal with MedStar will be integral to helping the startup get off the ground. InnoVital CEO [Greg Hiemenz](#) said he expects the company to grow in size and revenue as a result of the project, which will span several years. InnoVital, which spun out in July and does not yet have revenue, currently has seven full-time employees.

“It is a company builder,” Hiemenz said. “With the breakthrough technology and the team we have it’s going to lead to significant growth.”

Hiemenz said the company expects human trials of the device to begin in three years.

InnoVital isn’t the only company with a defense and security background discovering that their techniques for protecting national security and equipping military troops can also be used to secure sensitive medical data and improve treatment methods.

“We have an aging baby boomer population and health care is going to be critical moving forward,” Hiemenz said. “Taking these technologies into this market just makes sense.”

Lockheed Martin is [opening a new Center for Health Innovation](#) in Baltimore that will focus on growing the defense contractor’s health care technology business.

The opportunities for companies with technology, security and data analysis clout are vast in the health care field. The industry is growing and its technological needs are evolving, as federal health reform extends insurance to millions more Americans and medical institutions are pressured to find more efficient ways to treat patients.

Meanwhile, InnoVital will use its engineering background to improve methods for treating patients with respiratory illnesses.

The InVent Diaphragm Assist device will rely on artificial muscle technology InnoVital’s parent company has been developing over the past several years. It has been used to make helicopters operate more smoothly and in robotic arms that can carry injured military members off a battlefield.

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Greg Hiemenz is leading InnoVital Systems.