

Miracle man is racing time

Cathy O'Leary
Medical Editor

Barry Knowles is in a race against time, hoping researchers can unlock the secret behind his amazing battle against mesothelioma.

The 72-year-old has been dubbed a miracle man for the past six years, incredibly surviving the deadly asbestos disease without medical intervention.

Researchers have been trying to work out how his immune system has kept the disease at bay, in the hope they can replicate its effect in a vaccine that stimulates an attack on the cancer.

It is now more urgent they find the answer because the retired builder's once-dormant disease has reactivated and time is running out for him.

The groundbreaking immunotherapy research was launched yesterday when Mr Knowles gave researcher Bruce Robinson \$50,000.

It was raised by the Reflections Through Reality Foundation to fund work at Perth's National Centre for Asbestos Related Diseases.

The Rotary Club of Perth, together with the Rotary Club of Esperance and donations from families affected by mesothelioma, raised most of the money.

Professor Robinson's team plans to start a world-first clinical trial early next year.



Photo available at westpix.com.au

Barry Knowles hopes researchers can unlock the secrets behind his amazing battle with the deadly asbestos disease. Picture: Mogens Johansen

Mr Knowles is receiving palliative care and says if a breakthrough comes too late for him, he hopes it will help others.

He has offered his lungs to scientists to help them try to find a cure. "The tumours in my body have suddenly become

aggressive and I know now there is not a lot of time left for researchers to unlock the secrets to my immune system," Mr Knowles said.

"But the money raised by the foundation will help them get started and I pray they discover

something positive that will eventually produce a cure for those who will suffer this horrible disease in the years ahead."

His daughter Jo Morris, the foundation's operations manager, said her father's story of survival and determination gave

hope to other sufferers of the disease.

Rotary Club of Perth president Larry Hirsch said it was 50 years since Wittenoom closed but mesothelioma still affected more people in WA per capita than anywhere in the world.

Buddy says boycott call 'stupid'

Sydney

Outspoken boxer Anthony Mundine says he is considering a future in politics after calling for a boycott of the Australian national anthem at this weekend's AFL and NRL grand finals.

But Sydney Swans star Lance "Buddy" Franklin dismissed the idea as "stupid".

Mundine, 41, told a media conference at Redfern Gym yesterday that he would consider a move into politics in the next few years as an independent.

The former rugby league player said he was not trying



Anthony Mundine

to incite violence or division in calling for a boycott of the anthem, but he wanted to educate the Australian public about indigenous recognition.

Franklin, who is indignant, said there was "no

chance" he would boycott the anthem.

"Personally I think it's pretty stupid really. It's the Australian national anthem, it's a part of our sport, our history," Franklin said.

Mundine's plan was inspired by San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who kneels during the US national anthem before NFL games to protest against racism and police brutality.

Mundine said he did not want to pressure any players in the finals but said Franklin was thinking about the AFL, not his people.

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