Singapore researchers shed light on tackling Alzheimer’s

Key to fighting such age-related diseases may lie in targeting ageing process itself, they find

Timothy Goh

Singapore researchers have taken the first steps in developing new methods to tackle Alzheimer’s disease, which afflicts one in 10 people over the age of 65.

They have discovered that the key to fighting the disease may lie in targeting the mechanism by which healthy nerve cells age and eventually die. Their finding is significant as it is the first time that research has linked the process of healthy ageing to the development of Alzheimer’s disease.

In their study, scientists from the National University of Singapore (NUS), Yale-NUS College, Yale-SUNY College of Medicine, and the University of California, San Francisco, found that the process of healthy ageing is correlated with the accumulation of proteins in the brain and the formation of plaques, which are the hallmark of Alzheimer’s disease.

The team found that the treated worms not only recovered from their Alzheimer’s-like symptoms, but also lived longer than healthy worms that were not treated. The findings have opened up new avenues for developing drugs that could target the process of healthy ageing and prevent the development of Alzheimer’s disease.

Professor Gnath said: “We’ve shown that by targeting the process of healthy ageing, we can prevent the development of plaques and reverse the symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease. This is a major breakthrough in our understanding of the disease and opens up new avenues for developing drugs that could target the process of healthy ageing and prevent the development of Alzheimer’s disease.”

The study was published in the scientific journal *Nature* and is available for free online.

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