

Antibodies cross blood brain barrier in primates

Wednesday 5 November, 2014

Antibodies could cross blood brain barriers in primates, according to a study published in Science Translational Medicine today (Wednesday 5 November 2014).

Joy Yu and colleagues have shown that therapeutic antibodies can successfully cross the blood-brain barrier in primates and reduce levels of a toxic protein linked to Alzheimer's disease. The antibody reduces amyloid-beta levels, which is a protein linked to Alzheimer's disease, by binding with receptors and enzymes in the brain to pass the blood-brain barrier.

Alzheimer's Society comment:

Dr Doug Brown, Director of Research at Alzheimer's Society, said:

'The blood-brain barrier acts as a protective layer by stopping some things from passing into the brain from the blood. However, this protection can cause problems for scientists developing drugs for the treatment of neurological diseases, including dementia. These researchers have investigated attaching a potential treatment to a molecule that can pass through the barrier, therefore using this as a sort of passport into the brain. Showing that this works in primates is one step closer to using this technology for treatments in people.

There are very limited drugs available for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease and there is currently no cure for dementia. More research is now needed to see if this also works in the human brain, and whether the drug that makes it into the brain works as an effective treatment for people with Alzheimer's disease.'

- Ends -

Notes to editors:

225,000 will develop dementia this year, that's one every three minutes

Alzheimer's Society research shows that 850,000 people in the UK will have a form of dementia by 2015. In less than ten years a million people will be living with dementia. This will soar to two million people by 2051

Dementia costs the UK economy over £26 Billion per year. This is the equivalent of more than £30,000 per person with dementia.

Alzheimer's Society champions the rights of people living with dementia and the millions of people who care for them

Alzheimer's Society works in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Alzheimer's Society supports people to live well with dementia today and funds research to find a cure for tomorrow. We rely on voluntary donations to continue our vital work. You can donate now by calling 0845 306 0898 or visiting alzheimers.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society provides a National Dementia Helpline, the number is 0300 222 11 22 or visit alzheimers.org.uk

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