

More on the PGC-1 alpha gene

In January, we reported on a new study by Dr. Patrick Weydt and colleagues that showed that variations in the PGC-1 alpha gene were associated with delays in age of onset in Huntington's Disease patients. The PGC-1 alpha gene regulates mitochondria biogenesis and metabolism. This is an important finding because it suggests that this gene would be an important target for treatment.

The authors of the study, who looked at a sample of 447 unrelated Italian patients, noted that their findings needed to be confirmed in a different patient population. Just one month later, another group of researchers led by Dr. Larissa Arning have reported similar findings in a group of 400 German patients. Dr. Arning and colleagues found a polymorphism that delays onset by 2.2 years.

The next step is to determine the precise nature of the mechanism by which these genetic variations work. With the addition of this second study to confirm the findings of the first, it seems likely that we will see progress toward the development of a treatment that targets the activity of this gene.

References:

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