

Successful Ageing – A study of people over 100 years old

The ageing of the population of Britain is becoming increasingly important. Some people age happily, and very successfully leading active lives over 100 years but others do not, suffering from age related illnesses and only living into their 60's or 70's.

We are interested in identifying people who have aged successfully and lived to over 100 years of age. We want to identify why these centenarians have not suffered from significant age related illnesses by investigating their past history, diet, height, weight, family history and genetic makeup to answer three important questions:

1. Why people over 100 years of age have not suffered significant age related illness
2. What genes and environmental factors lead to greater life-span
3. How people over 100 years differ from patients with age related disorders such as Alzheimer's, ataxia, stroke, Parkinson's disease and neuromuscular conditions (why these individuals don't suffer from these conditions or get problems much later in life).

This long term study is funded at least until 2016 at UCL Institute of Neurology and involves collecting minimal information in an easy questionnaire, collecting DNA and mRNA from saliva or a small amount of blood from patients. There is no cost to individuals at all and they can participate by post, visit the hospital with expenses paid or one of the doctors in our team will visit them. They can consent to be involved in any way they wish. All patient details will be anonymous, important for a number of research reasons and we wish to make the information anonymously available to all researchers to benefit age research and illnesses.

We plan to store information and DNA/mRNA at UCL Institute of Neurology.

Professor James Goodwin, Head of Age UK Research, says: "We give our wholehearted support to a study which is of exceptional importance as the population ages, with increasing numbers of people surviving to over 100 years. This study is likely to contribute invaluable data which will contribute greatly not only to the health and care of older people but also to decisions on policy in these critical areas. We commend

and congratulate the researchers for their insight and undoubted skills in developing this research programme.”

To take part, please contact:

Henry Houlden MD, MRCP, PhD
Professor of Neurology and Neurogenetics
The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery
Institute of Neurology
Queen Square
London
WC1N 3BG

Telephone number: 0207 837 3611 x 84068

Email: h.houlden@ion.ucl.ac.uk