A step forward in stroke care in Sri Lanka

By Kate Devlin, Medical Correspondent

Researchers hope that the breakthrough could one day lead to new treatments for the devastating neurological condition.

The idea is that the gene could be connected to how the brain uses vitamin D, which is known to have a protective effect against the onset of the devastating condition.

The gene was identified in a group of 482 patients who suffered from Alzheimer's disease and compared to those of 482 people who did not have the condition.

The analysis was detailed enough to show significant differences in the pattern of genes within DNA cells, which are more common in patients with Alzheimer's.

The variation is close to the gene which codes for vitamin D in the brain, and has previously been linked to memory, the findings showed in the American Journal of Human Genetics.

“Possible is that this variation is in a region that may play some sort of regulatory role with vitamin D,” said study co-author Dr. Nathan Hale, co-director of the project at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.

A few foods contain vitamin D, including milk and cereals, although it can be produced naturally in the body through a chemical process involving sunlight.

The body’s ability to produce the vitamin declines, meaning that older people can be more likely to suffer from a lack of it.

According to Dr. Hale, the approach is still in its early stages, but the identification could lead to new treatments in the future.

The first programme of thrombolysis in public sector hospitals was launched in Sri Lanka in March 2007 at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka.

Since then all acute stroke patients in the area where all clients should routinely request CT brain for all stroke patients.

Thrombolysis for acute stroke

The results of a trial on the Mediterranean diet in patients with Alzheimer’s disease, but it is most likely that a combination of factors is responsible.

“Genetic inheritance plays a part, but the biggest risk factor is age,” said Dr. Hale.

“If your parent has dementia, your risk of developing the disease is around a little higher than if there were no family history.”

Alzheimer’s gene ‘linked to Vitamin D’

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