



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Achieving International Excellence

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR
HEALTH X AGEING

MEDIA STATEMENT

Monday, February 15, 2010

SEX HORMONE REGULATOR ASSOCIATED WITH POOR MEMORY

In a world first, researchers at the Western Australian Centre for Health and Ageing have discovered that a hormone controlling the release of testosterone is linked to poor memory in older men.

According to a study published in this month's issue of the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*, men with high levels of luteinising hormone (LH) had worse memory than those with lower levels.

Luteinising hormone is produced by the pituitary gland and controls the release of hormones including oestrogen in women and testosterone in men.

Lead author Zoë Hyde said while previous studies had found elevated LH levels in men with Alzheimer's disease, this was the first time that an effect had been seen in healthy men.

"This is an important finding, because the association appears to be independent of testosterone levels, which are controlled by LH. We know that testosterone acts on the brain in a number of ways, but LH was thought to have no direct effect," Ms Hyde said.

"This study provides new insight into how hormones affect the brain and reveals a potential target for Alzheimer's disease drug therapies. However, more work is required before we can fully understand the role that LH plays in the brain."

The groundbreaking research is part of the Health in Men Study that has been following a group of over 12,000 men aged 65 and over since 1996. It is the largest study of ageing men in Australia, and was funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia.

For more information visit <http://www.wacha.org.au> and The Journal of Alzheimer's Disease: <http://www.j-alz.com>

MEDIA REFERENCE:

Christianne White WA Centre for Health and Ageing (+61 8) 9224 2993 / (+61 4) 15 213 661

Janine MacDonald (UWA Public Affairs) (+61 8) 6488 5563 / (+61 4) 32 637 716

For more information about WACHA: www.wacha.org.au

About WACHA:

The Western Australian Centre for Health and Ageing (WACHA) is a non-profit research centre, which since 1996 has been awarded in excess of \$15 million in grants for research into frailty, dementia and mental health in old age, as well as for the prevention of disability from chronic disease. The Centre's main objectives are to translate research findings into real world applications and solutions for older Australians and more especially, to prevent, delay and cure age-related diseases. WACHA is partnered with the WA Institute of Medical Research and The University of Western Australia and is based at Royal Perth Hospital.

For more information visit <http://www.wacha.org.au/>

About the Journal:

The Journal of Alzheimer's Disease (<http://www.j-alz.com>) is an international multidisciplinary journal to facilitate progress in understanding the aetiology, pathogenesis, epidemiology, genetics, behaviour, treatment and psychology of Alzheimer's disease. The journal publishes research reports, reviews, short communications, book reviews, and letters-to-the-editor. Groundbreaking research that has appeared in the journal includes novel therapeutic targets, mechanisms of disease and clinical trial outcomes. The Journal of Alzheimer's Disease has an Impact Factor of 5.101 according to Thomson Reuters' Journal Citation Reports (2009). The Journal is published by IOS Press (<http://www.iospress.nl>).