

A drug could improve the memory of those with Alzheimer's disease

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A drug used in a type of hereditary metabolic disorder improved the memory of laboratory animals with Alzheimer's disease. The results of the project, developed by researchers of the Center for Applied Medical Research (CIMA) of the University of Navarra have been published in the journal *Neuropsychopharmacology*.

The research project showed that the drug sodium phenylbutyrate, prescribed until now for patients with alterations in the urea cycle, eases the fusion of proteins responsible for neuron connections, thus increasing the learning capacity of the mice involved. As a result, these discoveries offer new, promising perspectives for the treatment of Alzheimer's Disease and other related dementias.

In addition, these findings provide a new alternative to the drugs that are currently available for fighting this devastating disease, explained Dr. Ana García-Osta. Dr. García-Osta is a researcher from the Department of Neurosciences and the principal author of this project.

The research team is currently focused on discovering the acting mechanism in this drug. As the drug is now clinically available and well tolerated, the confirmation of its therapeutic affectivity in humans could be applied to Alzheimer's in a shorter period of time than other drugs being studied.

Alzheimer's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder associated with age and characterized by the progressive deterioration of cognitive and

intellectual abilities. "Cognitive deficit is associated with a loss of neuron connections. For the memory to develop, it is necessary for a series of cellular and molecular mechanisms to be activated. The interruption of these processes affects the capacity to assimilate and store new memories, explained Dr. García-Osta.

Source: Elhuyar Fundazioa

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