

Immunological study finds earlier way to diagnose axon and neuron degeneration in MS

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UCI immunologists have found that testing for increased levels of antibodies that inhibit energy production in neurons can detect axon and neuron degeneration in multiple sclerosis earlier than existing diagnostic tools.

The study, led by Yufen Qin, assistant professor of neurology, shows how these inhibitors trigger degeneration of axons and neurons, which results in demyelination, or the breakdown of neurons' protective coating.

Current spinal fluid tests for MS focus on demyelination, she says.

Qin adds that measuring these [antibodies](#), which inhibit an enzyme called GAPDH, could lead to earlier and more effective long-term treatment for MS - a chronic, often disabling disease that attacks the [central nervous system](#).

The study appears online in *The Journal of Immunology*.

Provided by University of California - Irvine

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