

Promising Alzheimer's drug trialled in a large EU study

December 9 2013

An extensive European study is currently investigating whether a drug used to treat high blood pressure may also help patients with Alzheimer's disease. The EU is investing almost 6 million euros on the project, in which Sahlgrenska Academy and Sahlgrenska University Hospital are responsible for Sweden's contribution.

The drug being trialled in the study, nilvadipine, is a well-proven treatment for [high blood pressure](#). Research has shown that nilvadipine counters the formation of [amyloid plaques](#) in animal brains.

The drug is now to be trialled with 500 Alzheimer's patients in nine European countries.

"Should this clinical trial be successful, nilvadipine would become the first Alzheimer's drug that not only reduces the symptoms of the disease but also acts on its causes. This could dramatically reduce Europe's costs for caring for patients with this neurodegenerative disease," says Anne Börjesson-Hanson, a researcher at Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg, who is leading the Swedish participation in the study.

The patients in the study will be treated with nilvadipine or a placebo (inactive substance) for eighteen months. Patients who are already being treated with drugs to relieve the symptoms of Alzheimer's will continue to take them as before. Follow-up and check-ups will be carried out at the memory clinic at Sahlgrenska University Hospital.

"We will carry out repeated tests on the [patients](#) to see whether there are changes in memory and cognition during the trial period," says Anne Börjesson-Hanson.

This major European research collaboration is called NILVAD, and is being coordinated from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. Research teams in the UK, France, Netherlands, Greece, Hungary, Italy and Germany are taking part alongside Ireland and Sweden.

Provided by University of Gothenburg

Citation: Promising Alzheimer's drug trialled in a large EU study (2013, December 9) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-12-alzheimer-drug-trialled-large-eu.html>

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