Curry spice holds clues to Alzheimer's drug targets

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Californian researchers have shed more light on the action of an experimental Alzheimer's drug based on a modified component of the curry spice turmeric. The researchers from the Salk Institute, found that the drug, J147, targets cell processes in the mitochondria – an area of the cell responsible for generating the energy. The results are published in the journal *Aging Cell*.

Dr. Sara Imarisio, Head of Research at Alzheimer's Research UK, said:

"This study suggests the J147 drug may provide a boost to the molecular battery that powers a cell and in doing so, hold back certain age-related changes and keep cells working better for longer. While diseases like Alzheimer's are associated with age, they are not a normal part of ageing and are caused by distinct and complex disease processes in the brain.

"Understanding how a potential new drug affects cells is an important step in the research process, but the ultimate test has to be how it impacts people's lives. This compound has not yet been tested in people, so we will need to see much more research before we can draw conclusions about its benefit against complex diseases like Alzheimer's. While the J147 drug is based on a component of a curry spice, there is no good evidence to suggest that eating turmeric or curry could prevent or treat dementia in people.

"To have the best chance of ending the long wait for new treatments, researchers will need to follow as many leads as possible, creating a

diverse pipeline of potential targets for further development."

Provided by Alzheimer's Research UK