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Alzheimer's may begin decade before detected, scientist says

WASHINGTON (AP) — Alzheimer's disease usually is diagnosed among the elderly, but a Florida researcher says his studies with laboratory rats show the process of mental decline may start years before the symptoms are detectable.

Gary W. Arendash, a scientist at the University of South Florida, said the long-term effect of chemical lesions on brain sites in rats resulted after 5 months in physical and mental symptoms that mimic those of Alzheimer's disease in humans.

He said the rats, because of their compressed life expectancy when

compared with humans, developed the full-blown Alzheimer's symptoms in what to them would be an advanced age. But the process that led to the symptoms was started while the rats were young.

"This may suggest that the destructive changes in Alzheimer's may be under way for a decade before memory loss or other symptoms are evident," Arendash said.

This means that Alzheimer's disease detected in the sixth decade of life may be the result of a disease process

that actually started when the patient was only in the 50s, he said.

A description of the study is published in Friday's edition of the journal Science.

Arendash and three colleagues conducted the study using standard male laboratory rats divided into groups. At the age of two months, said, one group received chemical lesions to a portion of the brain, comparable site in the human brain experiences major Alzheimer's disease.

Study says disorders may have genetic tie

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Many cases of depression, phobia and other mood and behavior disorders may stem from the inherited defect blamed for Tourette syndrome, whose victims jerk, bark and sometimes curse uncontrollably, according to a study.

A psychological questionnaire administered to Tourette syndrome patients and to others found that the Tourette patients and members of their families were significantly more likely to suffer a variety of mood and behavior problems.

The research indicates that a single inherited defect might cause 10 percent to 30 percent of all cases of hyperactivity, stuttering, multiple phobias, panic attacks, manic-depressive moodswings, depression, schizoid and obsessive-compulsive behaviors, dyslexia and conduct disorders, said Dr. David Comings, a geneticist at the City of Hope National Medical Center in Duarte, Calif.

"If your child is showing unusual

behavior — learning problems, problems with attention, severe misbehaviors — you should consider the possibility they may have a genetic disease and it's not because you raised them wrong," Comings said.

Studies have suggested links between Tourette and various other disorders, but Comings said his is the first to look at a wide variety of disorders.

But Ruth Bruun, a psychiatrist and the medical director of the Tourette Syndrome Association in New York, said that the percentage of non-Tourette disorders caused by the defective gene may be lower than the 10 percent to 30 percent cited by Comings. Most of the disagreement centers on whether Tourette syndrome is linked to conduct disorders, manic-depression and hyperactivity, Bruun said.

Comings said that if his estimate is correct, perhaps more than 1 million Americans carry the genetic defect associated with Tourette syndrome, instead of the 100,000 previously estimated.

Beating death of adopted girl causes uproar

NEW YORK (AP) — Elizabeth Steinberg's natural mother and hundreds of strangers Thursday mourned the death of the 6-year-old who was found beaten in her adoptive parents' apartment, a death a rabbi said he hoped would save the lives of other children.

Police found Elizabeth comatose and brain dead Nov. 2 in lawyer Joel Steinberg's Greenwich Village apartment.

A judge ruled Tuesday the girl was never legally adopted, and sources familiar with the investigation said Thursday that police still were trying to determine whether the girl was a commodity in a black market baby-selling ring.

Steinberg, a lawyer, and his live-in lover, Hedda Nussbaum, are charged with murder and endangering the welfare of a child in the case.

Senate looks to Nevada for nuclear dump

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate approved 63-30 on Thursday a major overhaul of the nation's high-level nuclear waste program, virtually tabbing Nevada as the most likely host for a permanent repository while scuttling plans to build an identical facility in the upper Midwest or the East.

Under current law, Yucca Mountain, as well as sites in Deaf Smith County, Texas, and the Hanford nuclear reservation in Washington state are candidates for exploratory work — including the drilling of deep shafts

— costing nearly \$6 billion.

The new plan includes a \$100 million annual federal payment to the repository state and \$50 million per year to the state in which an interim cooling and packaging facility, known as an MRS, is built.

Though the legislation, an amendment to a \$16 billion energy and water development bill, does not specify Nevada's Yucca Mountain as the first choice for a permanent burial site for spent nuclear fuels and other high-level wastes, it clearly points that way.

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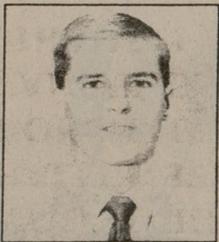
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The Dillard's College Advisory board has been formed with the intention of developing a direct communication link with the Texas A&M University student body. Our goal is to better serve the student populous and relate merchandise trends to their specific needs. Participants serve on a rotating semester basis, attending monthly roundtable discussion luncheons, working in the store and initiating special projects on campus.

Dillard's recognizes these outstanding students as they were chosen from many qualified applicants. They excel in academia and are active in honorary and service organizations.

We look forward to their insights and ideas in this mutually beneficial relationship.



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