Eleven new Alzheimer's 'risk genes'

新发现 11 种导致阿尔茨海默病的“危险基因”

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科学家们新发现了 11 种导致阿尔茨海默病发病的危险基因。这是迄今为止全球最大规模的阿尔茨海默病调研项目。来自 15 个国家，共 5 万多人参与了此次抽样调研。以下是 BBC 记者 James Gallagher 发回的报道：

Alzheimer's disease is a growing **burden** around the world. Yet basic questions such as what causes it or how to diagnose it remain unanswered. A global team of scientists searched through the DNA of more than 50,000 people in the **hunt** for clues. The study, published in Nature Genetics, identified 11 new genes on top of the ten already discovered. All can increase the chances of developing the dementia.

One of the lead scientists, Professor Julie Williams from Cardiff University, said **working out** the genes' role in Alzheimer's could lead to treatments. "It's not, you know, 21 different theories about Alzheimer's. They are forming **patterns** so we can look at a few different processes and try and understand those and then produce treatments from there."

Those **patterns** centre on the **immune system**, how the body deals with cholesterol and how cells in the brain transport material. But this is the first step. Further studies are now needed to identify **precisely** what is going wrong and to begin the slow process of **converting** the findings into treatments.

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Questions

1. True or false? *Nobody knows why people develop Alzheimer's disease.*
2. How many people took part in the study?
3. What do scientists need to do to find a treatment?
4. What system of the body could be involved in the development of Alzheimer's disease?

Vocabulary and definitions

burden	负担、包袱
hunt	寻找
working out	找出
patterns	规律
immune system	免疫系统
precisely	准确地
converting	转换

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Answers to the questions:

1. True or false? *Nobody knows why people develop Alzheimer's disease.*
   Answer: True.
2. How many people took part in the study?
   Answer: More than 50,000.
3. What do scientists need to do to find a treatment?
   Answer: They need to discover what each of the newly-discovered genes do.
4. What system of the body could be involved in the development of Alzheimer's disease?
   Answer: The immune system and the brain cells.

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