How one gene influences many diseases

In this new study the scientists show that the gene region which controls FADS1 appeared 6 million years ago and is present in human and chimpanzee but not in other species. Since increased production of omega-3 and omega-6 is favourable to brain development this event may have contributed to human evolution. A mutation happened 300,000 years ago which further increased the capacity of the gene to produce both omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids…

In historical times people ate equal amounts of omega-3, coming from fish and vegetables, and omega-6 coming from meat and egg.

“Since we now live longer and have changed our diet radically – modern food in the Western world has drastic excess of omega-6 – what was an advantage in historical times may have turned against us and become an increased risk for many diseases,” says Gang Pan [at the Department of Immunology, Genetics and Pathology, Uppsala University and one of the authors of the article].

…It affects the risk for allergies and inflammatory diseases like rheumatism and inflammatory bowel disease. In addition it influences the risk for colon cancer and other types of cancer, as well as the heart rate.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: Single Gene Found Connected to Many Diseases