

## Controversial theory linking herpes to Alzheimer's bolstered by study

An outside-the-box theory received new attention in an extensive [study](#) published [June 21] to the journal [Neuron](#). Researchers based out of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, the National Institutes of Health, and Arizona State University cooperated on numerous analyses to implicate herpesviruses, and particularly one called HHV-6, as having a possible role in Alzheimer's Disease.

HHV-6 and its close sibling HHV-7 infect more than 90% of people in North America by the time they are a few years old. Infections are almost entirely asymptomatic.

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[Geneticist Joel] Dudley and his co-authors were examining a bounty of brains from deceased patients with brain disorders and stumbled upon a number of curious correlations. For starters, HHV-6 DNA and RNA were highly concentrated in the brains of those diagnosed postmortem with Alzheimer's disease. At the same time, HHV-6 was not as abundant in the brains of those with other neurodegenerative disorders. Subsequent analyses revealed that the herpesvirus genes were interacting with genes associated with risk for Alzheimer's Disease.

The present findings are thorough, but do not definitively implicate herpesviruses as the cause of Alzheimer's disease. It's still possible that HHV-6 viruses are merely opportunistic agents, infecting brains already weakened by disease. Still, given the current bleak landscape of Alzheimer's treatment research, herpesviruses are definitely worth investigating further.

**Read full, original post:** [New Evidence for a Controversial Alzheimer's Theory](#)