

Anti-aging pill '5 to 12 years away'

[I]magine if, instead of a pill you could take to live for ever, there was a pill that could push back the ageing process – a medicine that could stave off the fragility, osteoarthritis, memory loss, macular degeneration and cancers.

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[Researcher Ming] Xu is at work on senolytics, a branch of medicine that targets senescent cells; the various faulty cells that have been identified as instrumental in our eventual demise. These so-called “zombie” cells linger and proliferate as we age, emitting substances that cause inflammation and turn other healthy cells senescent, ultimately leading to tissue damage throughout the body.

Xu was part of a team at the Mayo Clinic, an academic medical centre in Minnesota, that showed in 2011 that “using a genetic trick to get rid of these senescent cells can significantly improve health and lifespan” in prematurely aged mice.

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There are clinical trials in the pipeline, with drugs for osteoarthritis leading the way, but an effective pill accessible to all is certainly not imminent. Xu puts it at five to 12 years away: “Theoretically I’m confident.” Those looking to live for ever might be wise to book that cryogenics appointment, just in case.

Read full, original post: [The science of senolytics: how a new pill could spell the end of ageing](#)