



PARKINSON'S DISEASE NEWS

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SWEETENER FOR TREATING PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Journal of Biological Chemistry [2013] 288 (24) : 17579-17588 (R.Shaltiel-Karyo, M. Frenkel-Pinter, E.Rockenstein, C.Patrick, M.Levy-Sakin, A.Schiller, N.Egoz-Matia, E. Masliah, D.Segal, E.Gazit) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23637226>

The sweetener, mannitol, has been proposed as a potential means of treating Parkinson's Disease because of the dual mechanisms it has in the brain. Mannitol, which is used in medicine, is derived from mannose, which is a sugar. For more information go to Mannitol : <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mannitol>

Researchers assessed the ability of mannitol to (1) interfere with the aggregation of alpha-synuclein, and (2) its ability to disrupt the blood-brain barrier. Alpha-synuclein can accumulate in the brains of people with Parkinson's Disease and other medical disorders but can also be absent in Parkinson's Disease. It therefore appears that Parkinson's Disease can cause alpha-synuclein rather than alpha-synuclein being the cause of Parkinson's Disease as is often claimed. The blood brain barrier restricts access to the brain to certain substances. They demonstrated the effect of mannitol on alpha-synuclein by various means, and a decrease in alpha-synuclein accumulation.

The researchers therefore suggest mannitol as a basis for a dual mechanism therapeutic agent for the treatment of Parkinson's Disease. However, the research was only carried out on mice and flies, who did not have Parkinson's Disease and who were not rid of its symptoms.

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