

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Super Foods for Alzheimer's

Associate Professor Gerald Muench from the School of Medicine is collaborating with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to explore potential Alzheimer's treatments through a CSIRO Flagship Collaboration Research Fund Grant.

'As Australians age, the incidence of age-related neuro-degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease is growing, and treatments and preventatives are close to being available but are still only in experimental phases, says Dr Muench. 'Inflammation in the brain and subsequent nerve damage or dysfunction is considered to be an important contributor to the development and/or progression of Alzheimer's disease. If we could identify compounds in commercially available food or plants that have anti-inflammatory properties, then there is potential for discovering new, easy to administer, and cost-effective treatments that could delay its onset or slow the progression of the disease.'

Working in close collaboration with CSIRO, as part of their Preventative Health Flagship, Dr Muench will access the CSIRO's vast library of food and plant extracts and use their laboratory facilities to test a large array of compounds with known anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant actions. Active ingredients that interfere with one of the known ways that Alzheimer's is caused in humans will be identified, and protocols will be developed to progress this knowledge into clinical testing of the compounds in people who have Alzheimer's disease or are at risk of developing it.



This project will contribute to healthier ageing in Australia by contributing to disease prevention strategies for older people in Australia, thus providing better quality of life for Alzheimer's patients and their families.

Project Title: Identification of anti-inflammatory compounds from food and plant libraries as therapeutics for Alzheimer's disease

Funding has been set at: \$88,000

Contact Details: g.muench@uws.edu.au,
<http://www.uws.edu.au/medicine>

August 2008