

'Alzheimer's gene' harms children

Chris Smyth Health Editor

Children with a gene linked to Alzheimer's already have problems with their brain, an American study suggests.

Key parts of the brain were smaller in children with a gene variant and they did worse on thinking tests, researchers found.

They said that their results could help target efforts against dementia but could not show that children would go on to de-

velop the disease. People with the APOE4 gene have a higher risk of Alzheimer's in old age. This study looked at 1,200 children to test the effects of the gene in early life.

The hippocampus, which is known to play a role in memory, was 5 per cent smaller in children with the variant, the study reported in *Neurology*.

The Alzheimer's Society called for caution and said that the results would need to be replicated in a larger study.

Times 14 July 2016