

Friendly gut bacteria helps to treat Alzheimer's, asthma and cancer

◆ Freeze-dried bacteria from the guts of healthy people could help tackle Parkinson's, Alzheimer's disease, asthma, and even cancer, experts say.

British scientists have isolated strains of friendly bugs that appear to have significant effects on the immune system, and hope they could replace chemotherapy drugs or steroids.

Poor gut health is now linked to the development of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Crohn's disease, asthma, allergies, inflammatory bowel disorders, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, autism, cancer, and HIV.

Duncan Peyton, chief executive of 4D Pharma, a British firm, said that replacing missing bacteria could restore good health. He said: "We're always told to go with your gut feeling and there is clearly an association between health and what's going on in your gut."

A study by 4D Pharma found that two strains of bacteria can protect brain cells against Parkinson's. It has also begun trials on irritable bowel syndrome. Elsewhere, trials are being held treating patients suffering from cancer in the weeks before surgery. Bacteria is taken from the faeces of healthy people, isolated and multiplied in the lab. It can then be given orally via a daily pill.

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