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AFX News Limited

New scan predicts Alzheimer's years before symptoms - study

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WASHINGTON (AFX) - Scientists may soon be able to scan for Alzheimer's disease years before the onset of symptoms using a computer program that measures metabolic activity in the brain, researchers revealed here.

'This is the first demonstration that reduced metabolic activity

in the hippocampus may be used to predict future Alzheimer's disease,' said Lisa Mosconi of New York University's School of Medicine, who led the research and developed the technology.

'Although our findings need to be replicated in other studies, our technique offers the possibility that we will be able to screen for Alzheimer's in individuals who aren't cognitively impaired,' she said.

'It's accurate in 85 percent of the cases.'

Mosconi presented her work yesterday before the International Conference on Prevention of Dementia, which runs through tomorrow.

The new technique builds on years of research by psychiatrist

Mony de Leon, director of the Center for Brain Health.

'Our basic results will need to be replicated in other studies

and expanded to include PET scans data from diverse patients groups,' he said.

Another study presented yesterday, of 1,800 elderly Americans of Japanese ancestry, showed that those who drank fruit or vegetable juice at least three times a week were four times less likely to develop Alzheimer's.

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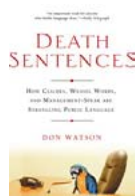
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