Research on Inflammasomes Opens New Therapeutic Treatments for RA

by AMY MANLEY

Rheumatoid Arthritis Research Opens New Doors

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) comes in many forms, and some are more severe than others. The condition is chronic and progressive; causing inflammation within the joints that can be very painful. Scientists at VIB and Ghent University believe that RA should be considered a syndrome rather than a disease, and should be treated accordingly.

Finding the right medication for RA can be difficult because, until recently, it's been considered a singular disease. New research suggests that considering rheumatoid arthritis a syndrome as opposed to a disease would enable those living with the condition to receive the proper treatment with an individualized approach. New information offered by current rheumatoid arthritis research will enable those with RA to receive a more personalized approach, which could result in the reduction of pain and other symptoms.

A New Outlook

It's been suspected for some time that the inflammation caused by RA plays a role in both the development and progression of the condition. According to statistics, approximately five million people in Europe alone suffer from RA, and over half have not found a completely effective treatment method for the condition.

According to Science Daily, scientists have been able to demonstrate the role of inflammasomes in RA by using a specific mouse model developed by colleagues Geert Van Loo and Rudi Beyaert in Ghent. They were able to combat the development of RA by blocking inflammasomes, which means that the possibility and prevention of developing RA could be coming soon.

Current rheumatoid arthritis research by VIB scientists also offers insight as to why RA should be considered a syndrome rather than one single disease by proving that similar symptoms can have different causes; thus the cause of RA can vary. This new information has presented an exciting challenge for many scientists. Some are aiming to determine if rheumatoid arthritis could be prevented altogether through precautionary genetic testing. The way rheumatoid arthritis is viewed by the medical and scientific communities has been turned upside down as a result of these new findings, and the future now holds the promise for a completely different approach to treating RA.