



NACC Media Comment

New research on Crohn's Disease from University of Liverpool

10th December 2007, St Albans, Herts.

The journal Gastroenterology has published new research into the cause of Crohn's Disease in its November edition. The researchers report that a substance called Mannan may inhibit the immune system by disabling the macrophages that kill harmful bacteria. They suggest this might be a possible pathogenic mechanism for Crohn's Disease. The research was conducted at the University of Liverpool and was funded by the Medical Research Council and CORE.

Richard Driscoll, Director of NACC, comments:

The study suggests there is a defect in one part of the body's immune system, the macrophages, that might then lead on to Crohn's Disease. The suggestion links in with some exciting progress recently in genetics research into Crohn's Disease, which is pointing strongly to a problem with the handling of bacteria or bacterial products in the gut. Research into which bacteria and why has to be a strong focus for future research into Crohn's Disease, which makes this paper so interesting. However, it is too early in the research to say whether this will lead to successful new treatments.

The researchers link their finding with the MAP bacterium that has previously been suggested as a cause of Crohn's Disease and which is known to survive pasteurisation in milk in small quantities, but this is one possible explanation and other factors are also possible.

The finding will stimulate great discussion and hopefully more funding will be made available by the Medical Research Council to enable us to progress research into Crohn's Disease more quickly.

Editor's Notes

Background notes on Colitis, Crohn's Disease and NACC are available on www.nacc.org.uk. An overview of current research is also available from the NACC website in the Research reports section.

NACC provides a valuable support network and information resource for people and families affected by Colitis and Crohn's Disease as well as raising significant funds for research. The 70 NACC Groups across the UK enable members to share information and experiences. The Daytime Information Line is available to members and non-members alike who have queries about all aspects of their disease. The NACC-in-Contact Line offers members a chance to speak to a trained volunteer with Colitis or Crohn's Disease. Membership of NACC is open to anyone who has Colitis or Crohn's Disease, their friends and families, health professionals and anyone who wishes to support the charity. Membership costs £12 in the first year, £10 thereafter.

NACC – Improving life for people affected by Colitis and Crohn's Disease

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