

## TECHNOLOGY

### *Study With Rats Mimics Damage From Alzheimer's*

SEATTLE (Reuter) — Researchers have for the first time successfully created changes in the brains of laboratory rats that mimic damage seen in Alzheimer's disease, according to a report published in the journal *Neuron*.

The technique should greatly accelerate research into causes of Alzheimer's and help develop new treatments for the incurable, mind-destroying disease that afflicts some four million Americans, said study author Alan Snow.

"We are now going to be able to answer many questions that couldn't be answered before," said Dr. Snow, a neuropathologist at the University of Washington School of Medicine who worked with collaborators in California, Canada and Japan.

Currently, the only way for doctors to be certain that a patient has Alzheimer's disease is to look at a piece of the patient's brain under the microscope. For that reason, most cases aren't confirmed unless there is an autopsy after death.

In Alzheimer's, a protein called amyloid accumulates in the brain, forming dense clumps called amyloid plaques.