The Daily Telegraph (London)

April 15, 2011 Friday   
Edition 2;   
National Edition

**Genetic link to speed of** **ageing and Longevity;**In Brief  
  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 13  
  
**LENGTH:** 81 words

Longevity genes that may control the speed of ageing have been found by scientists.

They have pinpointed eight genetic variations that control the production of a hormone linked to old age.

The eight genes control levels of the hormone, but by the time we reach 85, the body contains about five per cent of the peak amount we have in our twenties.

The results, published in PLoS Genetics journal, identified genes that controlled the concentration of DHEAS, with some associated with ageing.

The Sun (England)

April 15, 2011 Friday   
Edition 1;   
Scotland

**Wrinkles rumbled**  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 24  
  
**LENGTH:** 89 words

A NEW discovery could help beat wrinkles and other signs of ageing and let people live longer.

Scientists have identified eight genes that control levels of a steroid linked to age span.

Less of the steroid is produced by the adrenal gland as a person ages.

Experts will seek ways to make the genes more effective.

Steroid supplements may also help.

Scientists studied 14,846 people from Europe and the US.

Researcher Dr Guangju Zhai, of King's College, London, said it may be possible "in theory" to banish wrinkles and other ageing signs.

The Express

April 15, 2011 Friday

**Found: Genes that hold the secret of longer life**  
  
**BYLINE:** Victoria Fletcher  
  
**SECTION:** EDITORIAL; OPINION, COLUMNS; Pg. 15  
  
**LENGTH:** 522 words

SCIENTISTS have found eight genes that could help us to live longer, healthier lives.

The key to stop the distressing signs of ageing may lie in a steroid found in blood.

If scientists could alter how this steroid - known as DHEAS - works, then the ageing process could be slowed down.

Until now, there has been no way of knowing what role the steroid plays in ageing.

But Dr Guangju Zhai, from King's College London, whose research team identified the eight vital genes, said the discovery will help scientists gauge how much the steroid is to blame.

He said: "It has been a mystery how DHEAS functions.

"This new research offers a new insight into how the body controls levels of DHEAS and why it dwindles with age."

Previous studies have shown that the steroid reaches a peak at around 25 or 30.

But as we get older, levels plummet.

By the time we reach 85 years old it has diminished by 95 per cent.

The steroid has been linked to diseases that occur as we age, such as diabetes and certain cancers.

But it is not clear if it causes us to age, or is a by-product of ageing itself.

The theory has created such excitement in America that supplements containing the steroid are already being added to popular anti-ageing products.

Two of the genes have already been linked to ageing and two others to age-related diseases.

Now the King's College team says it now needs to carry out more detailed studies on the other four genes.

And researchers also need to understand whether different people carry different variants of this gene.

This would mean some people have higher levels of the steroid for longer and so avoid age related ill health for longer.

Understanding this could eventually lead to new treatments to block the process or offer the steroid as a supplement.

"We hope in the future to either manipulate the gene to control DHEAS levels to slow the ageing process and halt disease, or to artificially increase DHEAS with supplements," added Dr Zhai.

The research team analysed DHEAS levels and 2.5million genetic variants in 14,846 people across Europe and the USA.

They found eight common genes that control the blood concentration of DHEAS and, importantly, some of these genes are associated with ageing and common age-related diseases such as Type 2 diabetes and lymphoma.

Professor Tim Spector, senior co-author from King's College, said: "For 50 years we have observed the most abundant circulating steroid in the body with no clue as to its role.

"Now its genes have shown us its importance in many parts of the ageing process."

The authors published their work in the journal PLoS Genetics.

Last night, other experts welcomed the work but sounded a note of caution that it did not mean the UK was on the verge of producing an anti-ageing pill.

Professor Anne McArdle, of the School of Clinical Sciences at the University of Liverpool, said there was still not hard evidence that DHEAS controlled ageing.

Even then, she said, much more research would be needed to find out how doctors could manipulate it for medicinal use.

"The jury is still out on whether it controls ageing," she added.

'We hope in the future to slow the ageing process'