

Recent Findings in Former NFL Players Highlight the Need for New Approaches to CTE

TauGen advances novel drug candidates designed to target early biological processes following repetitive or severe brain injury

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A recent study published in the British Medical Journal examining chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) in former NFL players found CTE neuropathology in approximately one-quarter of deceased players studied, with longer football careers associated with greater disease severity. The investigators noted that the true prevalence of CTE pathology within the studied population could be higher. Previous research has also identified CTE

neuropathology at autopsy in individuals with histories of non-professional contact sports participation and in military veterans exposed to traumatic brain injury, including blast-related injuries and large-caliber weapons training.

Despite growing recognition of CTE, major clinical challenges remain. There is currently no established test that can definitively diagnose CTE in a living patient, and no therapy has been proven to prevent, halt, or reverse its underlying neuropathological changes. Clinical management therefore remains largely supportive, focusing on symptoms such as mood and behavioral changes, sleep disturbance, headaches, and pain.

Severe brain trauma and repetitive head impacts can initiate a complex cascade involving microvascular injury, inflammation, and disruption of normal neuronal and cellular processes. These events may contribute to abnormal tau biology, impaired neuronal function, and progressive neurodegeneration.

“The biology of CTE appears to begin long before the advanced neuropathology we ultimately see at autopsy,” said Dr. Brandon Lucke-Wold, a co-investigator involved in the development of TauGen’s drug candidates. “Brain trauma can initiate a cascade of vascular, inflammatory, and neuronal changes that may promote abnormal tau accumulation and progressive loss of

neuronal function. Other pathological proteins, including beta-amyloid, may also contribute in some patients. CTE is a complex disease, but understanding these early biological events gives us potential targets for intervention."

TauGen is developing a portfolio of novel molecules intended to interrupt specific trauma-induced neuropathological pathways following severe or repetitive head injury.

"Our strategy is to intervene as close to the initiating injury as possible, before downstream pathological processes become established," said Dr. Henry Chilton, Chief Executive Officer of TauGen. "Our initial development program includes a nasally administered formulation designed for use at or near the time of traumatic injury, and other formulations intended to provide additional therapeutic options during the period when important injury-related biological processes are occurring."

TauGen LLC is an early-stage drug development company closely affiliated with [CereMark Pharma](#), LLC. The company is focused on developing targeted therapies addressing biological mechanisms associated with traumatic brain injury and CTE-related neuropathology.

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