Neurodegeneration in the ageing society

Why do we get old? What factors are involved in "healthy" ageing and what goes wrong in age-related diseases? Ageing has been long considered a stochastic deterioration process shaped by environmental and stressful conditions. However, recent work has highlighted the role of complex genetic traits in the determination of the life span in different organisms. This suggests the possibility to control the ageing process and prevent the unwanted consequences of a long life span: age-related diseases. Although it is well-recognized that age is a risk factor for neurodegenerative diseases, the mechanisms involved are practically unknown.

DZNE scientists are investigating the missing link between age and neurodegenerative diseases, both healthy and unhealthy ageing and help developing life-long strategies to prevent the onset of neurodegenerative diseases.

While research on disease mechanisms will lead to long-term benefits for society, the creation of a national registry for neurodegenerative diseases will provide shorter-term benefits. A direct telephone line to link experts (scientists and clinicians) with the public is being implemented in collaboration with academic and non-academic (Alzheimer's Gesellschaft) organizations. Ultimately, links between scientists, clinicians, nursing homes and families will lead to improved health care in the upcoming few years.