

## Oz Buzz Updates: Day 1

Day 1 of our coverage of the Huntington's disease World Congress 2011 in Melbourne



By Dr Jeff Carroll

September 12, 2011

Edited by Professor Ed Wild

**O**ur first daily report from the Huntington's disease World Congress brings together all our live updates from our twitter feed. Follow us live for the second day at @HDBuzzFeed. Video of the day's live Oz Buzz session - with news, interviews and features - will be available to watch at HDBuzz.net later this week.

## Monday, September 12, 2011

8:26 - G'day from Melbourne! The World Congress on Huntington's disease has begun. Stay tuned for Jeff and Ed's science news updates



*Prof Sarah Tabrizi at the World Congress on Huntington's disease*

8:33 - Ed and Jeff are reporting from the opening session

8:36 - **Ed:** Prof Julie Stout opens the meeting and welcomes the most international audience ever at a World Congress

8:55 - **Ed:** Peter Harper recaps the history of HD & highlights the sharing of successes and challenges between scientists & family members

9:60 - **Jeff:** Peter Harper encourages us to remember that the HD community has been pioneers of how patient communities can serve each other

9:16 - **Jeff:** “Everyone can play a part in helping to bring a cure closer” - Peter Harper.

9:27 - **Jeff:** Real treatments are in development. Hopefully new trials within 24 months. - Sarah Tabrizi

9:37 - **Ed:** Sirtuin-1 inhibitor drug that may help cells get rid of mutant protein being tested in patients now

9:39 - **Jeff:** Pharma giant Pfizer hopes to test a novel compound in HD patients within 24 months. - Sarah Tabrizi

9:47 - **Ed:** Tabrizi announces the Track-HD battery of tests to enable us to run clinical trials in early HD to test new drugs

9:50 - **Jeff:** Despite brain atrophy, HD mutation carriers don't do worse over 24 months on mental or motor tasks - TRACK HD results

10:40 - **Ed:** Tabrizi announces TrackOn-HD, a new international study of how the brains of HD gene carriers compensate for the genetic mutation

10:15 - Don't forget we'll put your questions to top HD researchers live at the end of the day. Tweet them or email [worldcongress@hdbuzz.net](mailto:worldcongress@hdbuzz.net)

10:41 - Ed and Jeff now reporting from “clinical research” session

10:48 - **Ed:** Re-analysing data about ‘normal’ and ‘expanded’ CAG length casts doubt on any relationship between the two - Prof Jim Gusella

10:50 - **Ed:** Expanded alleles are still bad- but a person's ‘lower’ CAG score doesn't seem to matter

11:10 - **Jeff:** Whole genomes of HD patients are now being sequenced to look for changes associated with early or late symptom onset

11:30 - **Jeff:** Jim Gusella - slime mold have a Huntingtin gene, and we can learn what the gene normally does by studying it

11:15 - **Jeff:** PREDICT-HD has 10 years of brain imaging from 657 subjects, allowing investigators to understand how HD changes brains

**“Everyone can play a part in helping to bring a cure closer - Peter Harper ”**

11:16 - **Ed:** MRI scans can pick up widespread brain changes as far as 15 years before symptom onset- Elizabeth Aylward/PREDICT-HD study

11:30 - **Jeff:** HD patients with different symptoms - psychiatric, movement or thinking - have different shaped brains - Elizabeth Aylward

11:42 - **Jeff:** Tony Hannan tells us that making the lives of mice more exciting improves HD symptoms

- 11:49 - **Ed:** HD mice that are more active have chemical and gene control changes that improve the connections between neurons
- 11:59 - **Ed:** could drugs mimic or enhance the beneficial effects of staying active in HD? Tony Hannan is working on it
- 12:17 - **Ed:** Colin Masters studies harmful proteins in Alzheimer's & thinks lessons learned in AD could help us to crack Huntington's
- 12:20 - **Ed:** Huntingtin protein binds to copper atoms. Drugs that affect this might alter how harmful the protein is. Trial being planned
- 12:24 - **Ed:** Prana Biotech 12-site study of PBT2 drug aiming to reduce HD damage by influencing copper levels, starting late 2011 in Aus & USA
- 13:37 - **Ed** now reporting from session on 'Clinical care: youth and young'. Jeff's in the 'Basic science: therapeutic strategies' session
- 13:51 - **Jeff:** Isis pharma has three separate strategies to reduce levels of the mutant Huntington protein, all looking good!
- 13:58 - **Ed:** We're only just discovering how the brain develops during teenage years. This needs to be studied in HD- Dr Nicholas Allen
- 14:00 - **Jeff:** Short-term treatment of HD mice with drugs that reduce mutant Huntington levels has long term benefit - Don Cleveland
- 14:12 - **Ed:** Visit [hdyo.org](http://hdyo.org) - the HD youth organisation, launching Jan '12. International support network for young people affected by HD
- 14:16 - **Ed:** HDYO will provide info for kids, teens, young adults & parents - translated into several languages
- 14:37 - **Ed:** Moving testimonies from HD family members. People's ability to remain strong against extraordinary adversity never fails to amaze
- 14:45 - **Ed:** Euro-HD network survey of young ppl reveals lack of support and info about many aspects of life with HD, HDYO.org will help
- 15:00 - **Jeff:** Xiao-Jiang Li is moving beyond mice, making pig and monkey models of HD

---

*The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare. [For more information about our disclosure policy see our FAQ...](#)*

---

## **GLOSSARY**

**huntingtin protein** The protein produced by the HD gene.

**neuron** Brain cells that store and transmit information

**magnetic resonance** A technique using powerful magnetic fields to produce detailed images of the brain in living humans and animals

---

© HDBuzz 2011-2024. HDBuzz content is free to share, under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.

HDBuzz is not a source of medical advice. For more information visit [hdbuzz.net](https://hdbuzz.net)

Generated on May 07, 2024 — Downloaded from <https://en.hdbuzz.net/046>