

VYT 2024 Entry #4

Cause-and-effect in cells from people with ME/CFS

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Imagine waking up one day unable to move, unable to speak, unable to look at the sunlight. Soaps and detergents cause chest pains and breathing problems. Unable to live your life and no one has answers as to why or how this is happening and there are no effective medicines available for you. This is how millions of people are living every single day around the world.

The aim of my PhD is to try and answer the why and how. Studies included from our lab have shown that there are a number of defects in how cells from people with ME/CFS make energy versus healthy control cells.

Making energy in the cell is not a simple process and we have identified defects in several major steps involved. While we know that these defects are happening in ME/CFS cells, we don't know which of these is the first defect that is then causing the other defects.

So that's where I come into the picture. I'll be looking at the relationship of these energy producing defects to hopefully figure out the ME/CFS mastermind. If we can figure out a causal effect, we can work towards developing a treatment for the millions of people out there living with ME/CFS.

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