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Exclusive: How We Age is Determined By Our Genes/ 24.2.2013• A. Velasco• Posted At 06:00 PM



In an exclusive interview with PensionCalculator.org, a scientist behind groundbreaking new research on human aging explains that humans may age according to their genetic programming.

Biological clocks

Dr. Leonid Gavrilov, one of the researchers behind the recently published *Evolutionary Theories of Ageing and Longevity*, explained that aging may be run by our 'biological clocks,' as we age just as regularly as we go through early developmental stages like puberty.

Before this research, scientists believed that while things like puberty could be accurately predicted, events having to do with aging – like menopause – took place more randomly because they were a result of human bodies 'wearing out.' However, according to the new research, "age at menopause has surprisingly small variability as if it is determined by biological clocks rather than by random loss of oocytes," said Dr. Gavrilov.

He went on to say that this research is important "because of heated debates among scientists on the nature of human ageing – whether it is simply a wearing out, like an accumulation of random damage, or a genetic program similar to other early developmental programs like reaching sexual maturity."

Finding out how and why we age has a "profound effect" on scientists' ability to help us live longer. "If ageing is a wearing-out process, like in cars and other machines, then the emphasis should be on maintenance and repair through stem cells and other research," said Dr. Gavrilov. However, as the new research presents aging is a genetic program, "the emphasis should be on identification of 'ageing' genes and attempts to reprogram it."

Effects on pensioners

Though lengthening healthy human lifespans would affect everyone, pensioners in particular need to consider how this could affect their retirement.

Arabela Velasco of PensionCalculator.org said: "As life expectancy increases, so does the [state pension age](#), putting pressure on individuals to provide for their own retirement so that they can retire on their own terms. We all plan to live long, healthy lives – so protect that life with retirement income that lasts as long as you do."

Protection isn't just about saving, however, as over-50s need to think about "the unthinkable," the possibility of their life being cut short. "[Over 50s](#) plans from providers like [Shepherd's Friendly](#) are one way to ensure that no matter how long you live, your loved ones are covered," Velasco continued.

Source: [Research reveals ageing related to genetic programming](#)
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