

Texas researchers to study impact of Alzheimer's disease on Hispanics

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AUSTIN – Texas researchers are starting a new project to study the impact of Alzheimer's disease on Hispanics.

The Texas Alzheimer's Research Consortium announced the study Wednesday, noting that Hispanics have high rates of diabetes and heart disease, which are linked to the onset of Alzheimer's.

Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, the University of North Texas Health Science Center and the UT Southwestern Medical Center were already members of the research group, which announced the addition of the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Texas lawmakers have been giving the group state money since 2005, including \$3.9 million in the current two-year budget. The group has created a "bio-bank" of blood tissue data stored for research as well as information on clinical, psychological and lab data on 800 volunteers recruited for Alzheimer's research.

On Wednesday, former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, whose husband suffers from Alzheimer's, spoke briefly to the state Senate.

"It takes a devastating toll not only on the individual who suffers from it, but on the family," she said. "I congratulate Texas and the Legislature for what you've done so far."

The new Texas project will recruit volunteers from a heart and aging study in San Antonio that began in 1979.

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