FAU Drug Study Proposal Selected by National Institute on Aging
Interventions Testing Program

The National Institute on Aging’s (NIA) Interventions Testing Program (ITP) recently approved a proposal by two Florida Atlantic University faculty members to test the known anti-inflammatory drug *sulindac* in a pilot study for life span extension. ITP accepts between three to five interventions for testing each year, among a large number of proposals from across the nation.

Distinguished Research Professor Herb Weissbach, Ph.D., and Shailaja Kesaraju Allani, Ph.D, research assistant professor- both of FAU’s Center for Molecular Biology and Biotechnology in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science- based the proposal on years of research conducted at FAU on the drug, which revealed other unique biological properties that protect normal cells against oxidative damage that occurs after traumatic events such as heart attack and oxidative damage to the retina. Additionally, they have shown that *sulindac* can make anti-cancer drugs more effective in killing cancer cells.

“Since oxidative damage is believed to also play a significant role in age-related diseases and the aging process, the NIA selected *sulindac* to test for its ability to extend life span in mice,” said Weissbach. “We are thrilled to continue the work done in collaboration with our FAU colleagues Dr. Howard Prentice and Dr. Janet Blanks through the ITP program, which will hopefully lead to more effective treatments for common diseases we face with age, including cancer.”

The ITP program carries out testing studies in specialized facilities housed at University of Michigan, The Jackson Laboratory, and University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. The program is designed to involve collaborations with investigators at any university, institute, or other organization that has ideas about pharmacological interventions that might slow the aging process and wishes to test these in a lifespan study of mice.

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