

# Researchers answer decades-old question about protein found in Alzheimer's brain plaques

More than 30 years have passed since the amyloid precursor protein was first identified. In the late 1980s, several research teams across the globe traced the protein fragment found in amyloid plaques back to a gene located on chromosome 21. The gene encodes a longer protein that is cleaved into several fragments, one of which ends up in amyloid plaques.

Decades of research have focused on the cleavage process that leads to the formation of the amyloid- $\beta$  fragment and its subsequent aggregation, in the hope of identifying new therapeutic avenues for Alzheimer's. Meanwhile, an important question remained unanswered: what does the rest of the amyloid precursor protein actually do?

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