

## Welcome to HDBuzz!

HDBuzz is the first Internet portal for the rapid dissemination of high-quality Huntington disease (HD) research news to the global community, written in plain language by HD clinicians and scientists. It covers laboratory and clinical research, with the aim of helping people to understand the latest HD science in their own terms. HDBuzz was founded by Dr. Ed Wild and Dr. Jeff Carroll, HD scientists in the UK and USA, respectively.

This fact sheet is a summary of what HDBuzz is and what you can expect to discover. HDBuzz has been designed specifically for people who are new to Huntington disease, or new to the world of HD research. Reading HDBuzz will help you understand the basics of Huntington disease and get up to speed with some of the most promising things scientists are doing to come up with effective treatments for HD. You can access this summary on HDBuzz.net (<http://en.hdbuzz.net/056>).

## Most promising possible treatments

Some of the world's top scientists are working to develop treatments for HD, and real progress is being made. Dozens of possible treatments are being worked on. Every day a successful treatment gets one day closer. Here are the top four approaches of HDBuzz.

- **Gene silencing:** Huntington disease is caused by a faulty protein, and gene silencing drugs tell cells not to make that protein. Gene silencing is HDBuzz's best hope for an effective treatment. Read about it in **Gene Silencing Primer** and find out just how close it's getting in the very latest gene silencing articles.
- **KMO inhibition:** KMO is a chemical machine that determines the balance of certain helpful and harmful chemicals in cells. The article on **KMO Inhibitor Drugs** explains how blocking it might be useful for treating Huntington disease.
- **PDE inhibition:** PDEs are a family of molecules involved in chemical signalling between neurons. PDE inhibitor drugs are being developed for Huntington disease — read about them **here**.
- **Protein tagging:** Scientists call it post-translational modification, we call it tagging. Cells add little chemical tags to proteins, and the tags alter the proteins' behaviour. One approach to treating Huntington disease is altering the way cells tag the harmful protein. Read all about it in the article on **Re-routing the Huntingtin Protein**, then read the latest articles on tagging.

## Living with HD:

Some of the most popular HDBuzz articles offer the latest information about day-to-day issues faced by Huntington disease family members.

- **Making Babies** explains how people at risk of HD can use assisted fertility methods to have HD-free kids — even if the would-be parents don't want to be tested themselves.
- The article on the **Genetic Gray Area** of HD sheds light on the often confusing topic of people whose HD genetic test result isn't quite positive or negative, but somewhere in the middle.
- Many HD-affected people are frustrated by a lack of interest or expertise from care professionals. Take a look at the article on **Closing the Care Gap** to find out about the expert guidance available to professionals. Why not show it to the professionals looking after you?

**HDBuzz Science FAQ covers the very basics of HD and introduces some ideas about why we need research to find treatments.**

# HDBuzz - Welcome aboard!

*For those new to Huntington disease, or new to the world of HD research.*

## Glossary

**Post-translational modification:** The addition of small chemical tags to a protein after it has been synthesized. These tags often change the location or function of the tagged protein.

**Huntingtin protein:** The protein produced by the HD gene.

**Gene silencing:** An approach to treating HD that uses targeted molecules to tell cells not to produce the harmful huntingtin protein.

**Bone marrow:** The gooey stuff in the middle of bones that manufactures blood cells. When eaten, it gives dogs a healthy coat and vitality.

**Stem cells:** Cells that can divide into cells of different types.

**Neuron Brain:** Cells that store and transmit information.

**KMO:** Kynurenine mono-oxygenase, an enzyme that controls the balance of harmful and protective chemicals resulting from the breakdown of proteins.

*HDBuzz regularly produces reports from major scientific meetings and conferences. They're a great way to get an overview of all the hottest Huntington disease research. Catch up on the latest conference news here.*

## Getting behind the headlines

A key mission of HDBuzz is to help readers sort out the hope from the hype. News and blog stories can sometimes give a false impression of how promising a particular treatment is, or how soon it could deliver for HD-affected people.

- **Ten Golden Rules** suggests ten simple steps to help you draw hope from a science news story, without being disappointed by impossible promises.

**Meanwhile, these articles deal with areas of HD research that generate a lot of headlines, but while interesting and potentially useful, they aren't necessarily able to live up to the hype.**

Mesenchymal Stem Cells (stem cells from bone marrow) — an interesting approach but far from being a treatment for HD right now.

Stem Cell Primer explains the real value of stem cells, right now — as tools to help us understand Huntington disease.

Huntexil™ — an experimental drug aimed at improving movements in HD — isn't approved for human use because the clinical trial evidence has not convinced the regulatory agencies. The latest Huntexil article will update you on where HDBuzz is and what happens next.

## Make yourself at home!

HDBuzz is designed so that each article makes sense on its own and gives you all the background information you need, so don't be afraid to explore.

- Each article has a **related articles** box, containing links to external sites and related HDBuzz articles.
- Every article has a **topics** box so you can easily find content on a particular subject.

Don't forget to send feedback via the 'Enjoyed' or 'Didn't understand' buttons, and if there's something about HD research you'd like explained but can't find here, feel free to use the 'Suggest an article' box on the front page.

Make sure you don't miss anything exciting. Follow HDBuzz on Twitter or Facebook, or sign up for email updates!