

Neuroscience

The Brain's Waste-Disposal System May Be Enlisted to Treat Alzheimer's and Other Brain Illnesses | An internal plumbing system rids the brain of toxic wastes. Sleep is when this cleanup ritual occurs

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Scientific American, March 1, 2016

Preview:

The human brain weighs only about three pounds, or roughly 2 percent of the average adult body mass. Yet its cells consume 20 to 25 percent of the body's total energy. In the process, inordinate amounts of potentially toxic protein wastes and biological debris are generated. Each day, the adult brain eliminates a quarter of an ounce of worn-out proteins that must be replaced with newly made ones, a figure that translates into the replacement of half a pound of detritus a month and three pounds, the brain's own weight, over the course of a year.

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<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-brain-s-waste-disposal-system-may-be-enlisted-to-treat-alzheimer-s-and-other-brain-illnesses/>