CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2013 PROJECT SUMMARY

Name(s)

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Project Number

33404

Project Title

Raising Awareness to Prevent Tay-Sachs

Abstract

Objectives/Goals

Tay-Sachs is a neurodegenerative disease that has no cure. Since many people don't know about this devastating disease,the goal of this project is to learn if the population in San Diego is informed enough about the Tay-Sachs disease and to raise awareness about it.

Methods/Materials

An electronic survey regarding Tay-Sachs was conducted and sent to a variety of subjects from different genders, religions and ages. Although Tay-Sachs is mostly common among Ashkenazi Jews(Jews from Eastern European descent), the survey was also sent to Non-Ashkenazi Jews and Non- Jews as well. The results of the survey were graphed and carefully analyzed.

Results

Out of the 109 subjects who completed the survey, 91 were Jewish and 18 were not Jewish. Out of the 91 Jewish subjects, 80 were Ashkenazi Jews, meaning that they belong to the risk group for Tay-Sachs and 11 were not Ashkenazi Jews. The group control consisted only of 18 Non-Jews, since being not an Ashkenazi Jew doesn#t mean that that subject couldn't have some Ashkenazi background.The results of the survey showed that 52.5% of the risk population(Ashkenazi Jews) did not get tested for being a carrier of the Tay-Sachs disease and 40% had never heard of Tay-Sachs. 69% (29 out of 42 not tested) mentioned that the reason for not being tested was because it never occurred to them. There were 6 subjects who presented the most risk for having a baby with Tay-Sachs because they belonged to a risk group by being Ashkenazi Jews, they haven#t been tested for Tay-Sachs to find out if they are carriers,they are between the ages of 19-38 and they are all planning on having children within the next two years.

Conclusions/Discussion

It is concluded that for this type of disease, prevention is the best cure and it is necessary to raise awareness , especially in the high risk group. This can be achieved through educational programs at different levels in the community.

Summary Statement

This project is about finding out if the population in San Diego is informed enough about the Tay-Sachs disease.

Help Received

Grandmother told me the story of a child with Tay-Sachs; Aunt helped with ideas for decorating board; Mother advised questions for survey

Preliminary