



CHAPTER 3: HEREDITY AND VARIATION



Genes and Depression

Scientists at the Yale school of Medicine, U.S.A, have discovered that a gene in the brain which is related to exercise can act as a strong antidepressant in mice. It is found that if the gene called VGF is activated by exercise, it functions as an effective antidepressant. If this gene is blocked, the mice show depressive-like behaviour.



Obesity, Diabetes and Prostate Cancer

Scientists have found that obesity in African-American men and diabetes in Caucasian men may make it difficult for them to detect the onset of prostate cancer. The scientists found that body function disorders associated with obesity and diabetes prevent the detection of early prostate cancer until it is already fairly advanced.

The prostate gland is present in men only. It produces semen to activate the sperm cells. Most men above 60 years of age suffer from prostate enlargement, which can lead to prostate cancer.