

Investigator:	Thomas Wingo Phone: (404) 727-4905 Email: thomas.wingo@emory.edu
Primary Research Interest:	Neurology
Description of Research:	My research focuses on identifying the genetic risk factors and highly penetrant mutations in Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal dementia, Lewy body dementia, and other less well known neurodegenerative diseases that have a cognitive phenotype. To find these rare mutations and risk factors I study families with Alzheimer's disease or other neurodegenerative illnesses as well as individuals with a young onset of these diseases.
Relevance to VA:	Alzheimer's disease is the most common neurodegenerative disease, and despite decades of research why and how it occurs remain uncertain. It along with other neurodegenerative illnesses that affect cognition are projected to increase in prevalence dramatically as the population ages. Research to identify the genetic risk factors of the diseases as well as highly penetrant mutations that are likely causal in a minority of cases would greatly expand our ability to identify new targets for treatment. Given the overwhelming numbers of individuals expected to develop Alzheimer's disease within the next decade new treatments will ultimately improve the quality of life of millions of veterans and save the VA billions of dollars in caring for these patients.