Reviewer's report

Title: Lack of evidence for a genetic association between FGF20 and Parkinson's disease in Finnish and Greek patients

Version: 2 Date: 1 June 2005

Reviewer: Enza Maria Valente

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The authors have addressed all my previous criticisms in their cover letter but have made only slight modifications to the paper. While the manuscript is indeed acceptable as it is, I would have preferred that a couple of sentences be added to the paper regarding the two issues discussed in the cover letter:

1) the authors repeated statistical analysis after removing all early onset cases from their cohort and obtained identical results. I agree that they should leave the results as they are in the paper, but they could mention that repeating the analysis after exclusion of all early onset cases did not result in any significant changes. Also they should specify in the paper how many early onset cases are part of their cohort (as they state in the cover letter), or at least give standard deviations along with mean age at onset). This will add to the accuracy of results.

2) the authors comment that, given the strength of the association reported by van der Waalt, a positive association should be demonstrated also using a different genetic epidemiologic method, and therefore it is very improbable that the lack of replication is due to the use of different methodology. This is a very good point and I agree with it, but this should be added in the discussion when they comment on the possible reasons explaining the discrepancy of results.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'