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Old flies

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Studies of aging in a number of model organisms have provided insights into the mysteries of longevity. In the November 29 *Science* Rogina *et al.* add another piece to the aging puzzle, by investigating the relationship between histone deacetylases, caloric restriction, and longevity in *Drosophila* (*Science* 2002, **298**:1745). Flies that are heterozygous for a null or hypomorphic mutation in the gene encoding the Rpd3 deacetylase live longer than wild-type controls. The increased lifespan is equivalent to that seen in flies on a low-calorie diet. But the two effects are not additive, suggesting that they are on the same pathway. Both life-expanding treatments (diet or *Rpd3* mutation) are associated with an increase in the levels of the Sir2 deacetylase, a protein linked to life-span in yeast.

References

1. Model organisms as a guide to mammalian aging.
2. *Science*, [<http://www.sciencemag.org>]