

## Accepted Manuscript

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Barbara Bukowska, Bolesław T. Karwowski



PII: S0024-3205(17)30685-9  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lfs.2017.12.035>  
Reference: LFS 15497  
To appear in: *Life Sciences*  
Received date: 24 October 2017  
Revised date: 19 December 2017  
Accepted date: 24 December 2017

Please cite this article as: Barbara Bukowska, Bolesław T. Karwowski , Actual state of knowledge in the field of diseases related with defective nucleotide excision repair. The address for the corresponding author was captured as affiliation for all authors. Please check if appropriate. Lfs(2017), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lfs.2017.12.035>

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Barbara Bukowska, Bolesław T. Karwowski

Food Science Department, Faculty of Pharmacy, Medical University of Lodz, Muszynskiego 1, 90-151 Lodz, Poland

Corresponding author: Barbara Bukowska, Food Science Department, Faculty of Pharmacy, Medical University of Lodz, Muszynskiego 1, 90-151 Lodz, Poland. tel.: +48 42 677 91 40, e-mail: barbara.bukowska@umed.lodz.pl

Abstract: Xeroderma pigmentosum (XP), trichothiodystrophy (TTD) and Cockayne syndrome (CS) are rare genetic diseases characterized by a large range of clinical symptoms. However, they are all associated with defects in nucleotide excision repair (NER), the system responsible for removing bulky DNA lesions such as those generated by UV light: cyclobutane pyrimidine dimers (CPDs) and pyrimidine-pyrimidone photoproducts (6-4 PPs). Over the past years, detailed structural and biochemical information on NER-associated proteins has emerged. In the first part of the article we briefly present the main steps of the NER pathway with an emphasis on the precise role of certain proteins. Further, we focus on clinical manifestations of the disorders and describe the diagnostic procedures. Then we consider how current therapy and advanced technology could improve patients' quality of life. Although to date the discussed diseases remain incurable, effective sun protection, a well thought out diet, and holistic medical care provide longer life and better health. This review summarizes the current state of knowledge regarding the epidemiology of NER-associated diseases, their genetic background, clinical features, and treatment options.

Keywords: Xeroderma pigmentosum, trichothiodystrophy, Cockayne syndrome, nucleotide excision repair, photosensitivity, neurological abnormalities

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