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## Scientists after Sisnett's secret

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James Clement, CEO of Acron Cell biotech company in California, and his chief scientific officer Parijata Mackey. (Gercine Carter)

BY GERCINE CARTER | WED, FEBRUARY 23, 2011 - 12:02 AM

Barbados' oldest man's clean bill of health is attracting the attention of geneticists internationally.

James Clement, chief executive officer of the California-based research company, Acron Cell Biotech Company, and his chief scientific officer Parijata Mackey are in Barbados taking blood samples from supercentenarian, 111-year-old James Sisnett and 20 to 30 of his direct descendants including children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

The Sisnetts' whole genome sequence is being studied, at a cost of US\$25 000 for each participant. The Barbadian family are among only 1000 people in the world who will be sequenced by Acron Cell.

Clement told the **MIDWEEK NATION** his company had been doing the longevity research along with George Church, senior geneticist at Harvard University Medical School, as well as in collaboration with Michigan State University Medical School and the University of Liverpool, England, all of which provided advisors to the company.

The scientist, who is spending four days here, explained his purpose was

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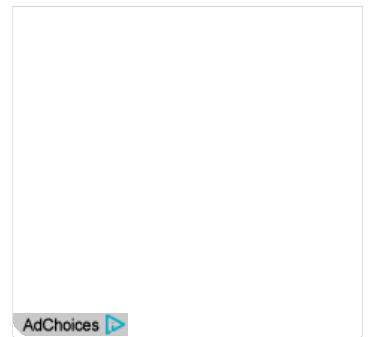
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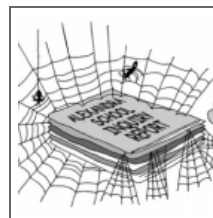


to find out what genes assisted people like Sisnett in avoiding cancer, heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's and other chronic diseases, which he said were the main illnesses affecting people between 65 and 100.

While there were 77 documented individuals around the world older than 100, Sisnett is one of only three men in the group.

"I was so impressed when I talked with him and his family," Clement said, of Sisnett. "He has never been hospitalised, never sick, and he told me the only nagging thing he has ever had was a toothache for which he was given some rum. It is really remarkable."

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