neuroimaging. I laid out the critical prediction derived from load theory, namely that visual cortex responses to distractor stimuli should depend on the level of load in the attended task, in the same manner as I had shown in my behavioural studies. About a year later, following a departmental seminar, Chris introduced me to his PhD student saying: "Geraint, this is Nilli: we will be testing together the critical prediction from her load theory". We then met in my office and quickly designed the study leading to our Rees, Frith and Lavie (1997) *Science* paper.

What are you up to these days?
Much of my work is still linked by a central focus on the effects of information load on brain mechanisms, various psychological functions (perception, conscious awareness, memory and emotion) and behavior. This central focus on load goes back to my PhD work, but while earlier on I focused on establishing the basic science behind these effects, I am now pursuing also some of the theory's applications for clinical populations and to everyday life.

For example, under some circumstances a high information load can lead to failures to notice important information (a phenomenon termed 'inattentional blindness'). This has a variety of practical implications, such as for better design of vehicles and aeroplanes: I am now collaborating with the automotive industry, pursuing applications of this to driving.

The effects of load on information processing can sometimes be positive as well. My research has shown that people are better able to ignore distracting stimuli when they perform a task that involves higher information load. This work suggests new ways of improving focused attention abilities, with implications that range from optimizing learning (for example, in educational settings), to helping individuals with attention difficulties (such as those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, 'ADHD') as currently pursued in my lab.

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Paget disease of bone in a Jurassic dinosaur

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Paget disease of bone — initially described by Sir James Paget in 1876 — is a benign bone disorder well known in human pathology. It leads to the enlargement and deformity of bones due to a combination of abnormal bone resorption and abundant new bone formation [1–3]. There is strong evidence that viruses are involved in the disease, coupled with a probable genetic component [3,4]. Paget disease in humans most frequently involves the skull, the spine and parts of the pelvis [1–3]. There is only limited evidence on Paget disease in other extant mammals, such as orangutans and lemurs [5]. Paget disease has also been described in human bones dating back to the Neolithic [6]. Here, we report Paget disease in a vertebra of the Jurassic dinosaur *Dysalotosaurus lettowvorbecki*, representing the oldest indirect evidence of viruses in the fossil record.

The diagnosis of Paget disease in humans is based on features observed through radiologic examination and laboratory testing [1–3,7]. Characteristic radiologic features allow accurate diagnosis comprising the classical triad of thickening of the cortex, coarsening of the trabecular pattern and increased size of the bone [1]. In some less conclusive cases, nuclear medicine may aid in diagnosis through demonstrating increased isotope activity in the affected bone due to high bone turnover [1].

Paget disease can occur in three phases — osteolytic, mixed and blastic [1,2]. In the initial osteolytic phase, bone resorption and replacement of hematopoietic bone marrow

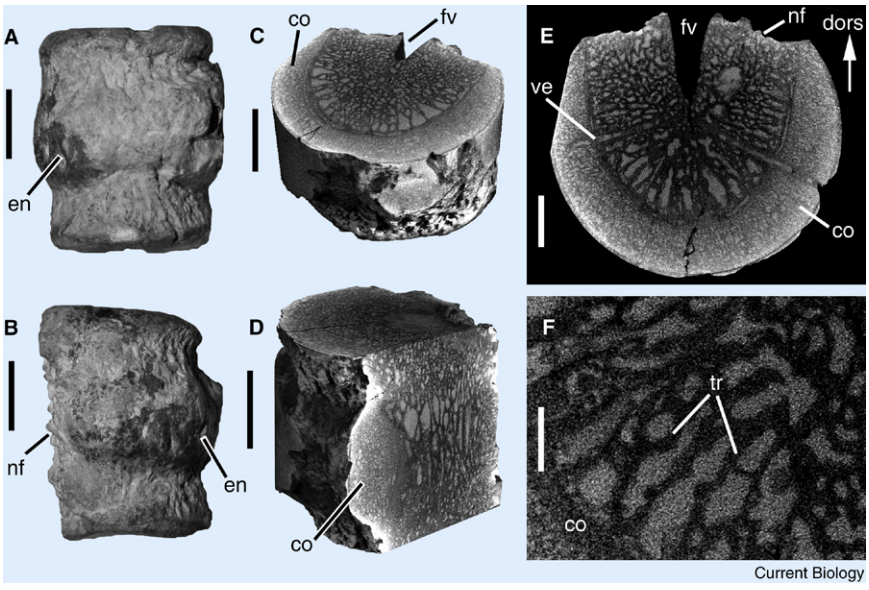

Figure 1. Paget disease in a dinosaur.
Pathologic vertebra of the dinosaur *Dysalotosaurus lettowvorbecki* (MB.R.1336) from the Upper Jurassic of Tanzania. (A) Photograph of the vertebral body in ventral view; scale bar equals 10 mm. (B) Photograph of the vertebral body in lateral view, dorsal is to the left; scale bar equals 10 mm. (C) Three-dimensional micro-CT image with transverse cross-section through enlarged middle part of the bone, dorsal is top right; scale bar equals 10 mm. (D) Three-dimensional micro-CT image with transverse cross section in the region of one endplate and sagittal section; scale bar equals 10 mm. (E) Transverse cross-section micro-CT image through enlarged middle part of the bone; the trabecular pattern of the vertebra is well preserved, thickening of the cortex contributes to bone enlargement, and small calibre vessels course through the dense cortex; scale bar equals 5 mm. (F) Transverse cross-section micro-CT image through enlarged middle part of the bone showing trabecular morphology; scale bar equals 1 mm (Supplemental information). Abbreviations: co = cortex; dors = dorsal; en = enlargement in middle part of bone; fv = foramen venosum; nf = neurocentral sutural facet; tr = trabecula; ve = vessel.

by fibrous connective tissue are present, identifiable as lytic lesions on radiographs. In the mixed phase, which is present in the vast majority of human cases, lytic and blastic changes coexist, resulting in a pattern of trabecular coarsening and thickening, as well as cortical thickening. Affected vertebral bodies at the mixed phase may show a 'picture-frame' appearance on radiographs, caused by the thickening of the dense cortex [2]. During the final blastic or sclerotic phase, abnormal bone enlargement and hardening are particularly common. When an entire vertebral body undergoes sclerotic alteration during the blastic phase, it takes on an 'ivory-vertebra' appearance on radiographs [2].

We studied a vertebral body of the bipedal, small ornithopod dinosaur *Dysalotosaurus lettowvorbecki* from the Late Jurassic (150 million years ago) of the Tendaguru locality in Tanzania (Supplemental information). This specimen is stored in the Museum für Naturkunde in Berlin (inventory number MB.R.1336). Macroscopically, the vertebral body shows near-uniform enlargement in the middle part of the bone with an irregular brassicate surface texture (Figure 1A,B). Micro-CT scans of the specimen demonstrate the characteristic radiologic imaging triad of Paget disease during the mixed phase (Supplemental information). These include a coarsening of the trabecular bone most prominent in the central and inferior portion of the vertebral body (Figure 1C-F), with thickening of the trabeculae in an anteroposterior direction. Enlargement is well delineated on the sagittal and coronal sections (Figure 1D; Supplemental information). In addition, the quantification of trabecular bone volume by means of segmentation demonstrated an increase from 34.7% (±1.0%) in a healthy control specimen (normal vertebral body of the same species, MB.R.1586) to 74.8% (±2.2%) in the pathologic specimen (Supplemental information). This is comparable to the more than two-fold increase that was found in a recent human study applying quantitative histomorphometry [7]. The cortex is also thickened as a result of high bone turnover and the vertebral body is consequently enlarged. The thickened cortex involves one endplate and the ventral and lateral margin. The opposite endplate and the dorsal margin are not involved (Supplemental information). Small calibre vessels coursing through the dense cortex are also observed. An increase in cell number is evident (Supplemental information) and correlated with the increase in cell number previously described in humans [7].

Evidence of Paget disease of bone in the fossil record is of particular significance for several reasons. First, viral infection is thought to be a major component of the etiology of Paget disease [3,4]. Second, there is a genetic component of Paget disease reflected by the presence of familial and sporadic forms of Paget [3]. There is evidence that mutations in the *SQSTM1* gene are present in ~40–50% of familial Paget disease cases and in 5–10% of cases of the sporadic form [3]. Results from epidemiologic studies suggest that *SQSTM1* is likely a disease susceptiblity gene rather than a disease-causing gene, where mutations are triggered by exposure to a disease-associated environmental factor [4,7]. There is strong evidence that those environmental factors include viruses (e.g. measles) [4]. In particular, there are nuclear inclusion bodies resembling paramyxoviruses found in osteoclast nuclei affected by Paget disease [8]. Thus, at present, Paget disease of bone can be considered as indirect evidence of the presence of viruses.

Potential direct evidence of viruses in fossil insects in Early Cretaceous amber was previously reported [9]. There is, however, scepticism as to whether the proposed findings are nonspecific microcrystals rather than viral constituents [10]. Our findings based on the analysis of the *Dysalotosaurus* vertebra suggest that Paget disease of bone evolved at least 150 million years ago and probably affected dinosaurs in a similar fashion as it does humans given identical radiologic imaging findings. Considering the viral component to Paget disease, our results indicate that paramyxovirus-like pathogens also would have evolved at least 150 million years ago. The case of Paget disease of bone presented here is, thus, substantially older than any previously reported [6]. Our results add palaeopathologic evidence to the commonly regarded fact that most common disease etiologies, such as traumatic, neoplastic, autoimmune, developmental, toxic/metabolic and infectious/inflammatory, were present and evolving for millions of years and crossed several species barriers [5].

Supplemental Information

Supplemental Information includes supplemental results, discussion and experimental procedures and can be found with this article online at doi:10.1016/j.cub.2011.08.006.

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