

Impulsive? It's all in the brain

PEOPLE who can't resist acting on impulse may have brain damage, research suggests.

The damage would be to a brain part, the nucleus accumbens, which is involved in making choices, say Cambridge University scientists.

The finding may

help to explain why drug addicts and victims of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder can't control their urge to "have it now".

In lab tests, rats with surgical cuts to their nucleus accumbens could not help acting impulsively when given a choice

between an instant small food reward or a generous one later.

Rather than wait for a better meal, they ate what was offered them first.

Before surgery, the rats had been holding out for the larger reward.

The research is revealed in the journal *Science*.