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etymologia

Prion

[pri'on, pre'on]

From *protein* + *infection*. Nobel laureate Stanley B. Prusiner, American neurologist and biochemist, coined the word prion in 1982 to describe the noninfectious agents he proposed as the cause of scrapie. Prusiner noted that, “Because the dominant characteristics of the scrapie agent resemble those of a protein, an acronym is introduced to emphasize this feature... the term ‘prion’ (pronounced *pree-on*) is suggested.” Prions are now recognized as etiologic agents of other transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, including bovine spongiform encephalopathy and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

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