In Focus

Spotlight on the November 26 Issue

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Clinical relevance and functional consequences of the *TNFRSF1A* multiple sclerosis locus

The authors analyzed data on 772 patients with multiple sclerosis (MS), assessing the role of the *TNFRSF1A* locus on disease course and treatment response.

Since the MS

rs1800693^G susceptibility allele affected the magnitude of monocyte responses to TNF- α stimulation, the TNF pathway is one network where the effect of multiple MS genes becomes integrated.

See p. 1891

From editorialists Tienari & Hohlfeld: "The new findings, although requiring confirmation, emphasize the bewildering complexity of the TNF pathway."

See p. 1886

Temporal trends in new exposure to antiepileptic drug monotherapy and suicide-related behavior

The authors used Veterans Health Administration databases to identify 90,263 older veterans who received a new antiepileptic drug (AED) prescription. Instances of suicide-related behavior (SRB) were identified using ICD-9-CM codes 1 year before and after the AED exposure date. The temporal pattern of AED exposure and SRB suggests that the peak in SRB is prior to exposure.

See p. 1900; Editorial, p. 1889

Epilepsy after TIA or stroke in young patients impairs long-term functional outcome: The FUTURE Study

This study investigated the prevalence of poststroke epilepsy and its effect on functional outcome in a cohort of 537 young stroke patients. Poststroke epilepsy was a common consequence that was an unpredictable, threatening adverse event, but also affected long-term functional outcome.

See p. 1907

Total cerebral blood flow and mortality in old age: A 12-year follow-up study

In this 12-year longitudinal study of 411 participants, a graded decrease in cerebral blood flow was associated with a risk of cardiovascular and noncardiovascular mortality. The brain is a key organ in regulation of homeostasis, and strategies to maintain adequate supply of cerebral blood flow may have implications for improved survival of older people.

See p. 1922

Cerebral microbleeds are related to loss of white matter structural integrity

In 4,493 people from the general population, the authors found that microbleeds on brain MRI were related to diffuse loss of white matter microstructural integrity, even after adjusting for cardiovascular risk and other imaging markers of cerebral small-vessel disease. These findings indicate that microbleeds reflect a severe form of underlying vasculopathy.

See p. 1930

Bilingualism delays age at onset of dementia, independent of education and immigration status

Case records of 648 patients with dementia (391 of them bilingual) were reviewed. Bilingualism was associated with delay in the development of 3 different types of dementia in both literate and illiterate patients, indicating that bilingualism may contribute to cognitive reserve.

See p. 1938

Reduced CSF p-Tau₁₈₁ to Tau ratio is a biomarker for FTLD-TDP

Antemortem CSF samples were collected from 30 patients with frontotemporal lobar degeneration (FTLD), and levels of 5 putative FTLD-TDP biomarkers as well as levels of total Tau (t-Tau) and Tau phosphorylated at threonine 181 (p-Tau₁₈₁) were measured using independent assays. This study provides evidence that the CSF p/t-Tau ratio distinguishes FTLD-TDP from FTLD-Tau.

See p. 1945

NB: "Bilateral posterior periventricular heterotopias," see p. e163. To check out other Resident & Fellow Mystery Cases, point your browser to www.neurology.org and click on the link to the Resident & Fellow Section.

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