In Focus

Spotlight on the June 17 Issue

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Accelerated lymphocyte recovery after alemtuzumab does not predict multiple sclerosis activity

One hundred eight patients were followed for a median of 99 months post alemtuzumab and were classified as active or nonactive after each cycle of treatment based on clinical relapse, increasing disability, or new T2/enhancing MRI lesions. This study does not support the use of cell counts as biomarkers for identifying patients at greater risk of active disease following treatment.

See p. 2158

From editorialists Robertson & Scolding: "...the response to and continuing need for alemtuzumab, as with similarly acting or other disease-modifying treatments, remains unpredictable; the identification of validated and reproducible biomarkers in the management of MS remains elusive."

See p. 2150

Factors associated with recovery from acute optic neuritis in patients with multiple sclerosis

This study identifies predictors of optic neuritis severity and recovery at 1 year in adult and pediatric patients with multiple sclerosis. Optic neuritis severity was similar in adults and children and was related to vitamin D levels; however, recovery was better in children. Male sex and severe attacks were associated with poor recovery.

See p. 2173

Intracerebral hemorrhage mortality is not changing despite declining incidence

Examining stroke trends can assess the effectiveness of prevention and treatment efforts. This study found that the incidence of intracerebral hemorrhage declined from 2000 to 2010 although mortality remained unchanged, suggesting that prevention efforts have improved but more work is needed to improve treatment.

See p. 2180; Comment, p. 2185

Joint effect of mid- and late-life blood pressure on the brain: The AGES-Reykjavik Study

This study showed that a history of hypertension is critical to understanding how late-life blood pressure (BP) affects brain structure and function. Lower late-life BP was associated with more brain atrophy and cognitive impairment, but only in those with a history of midlife hypertension, suggesting that "lower is not always better."

See p. 2187

Influence of hospital-level practices on readmission after ischemic stroke

Multilevel logistic regression was used to estimate the association between hospital-level practice patterns of care and readmission after adjustment for patient factors in adult patients hospitalized for ischemic stroke. Hospital practices play a role in stroke readmission that is complex and poorly understood; further work is needed to identify specific strategies to reduce readmission rates.

See p. 2196

Late-life cynical distrust, risk of incident dementia, and mortality in a population-based cohort

Psychosocial characteristics have been associated with adverse health outcomes, but dementia research has mainly focused on lifestyle risk factors. This study showed that higher levels of cynical distrust were related to higher risk of incident dementia, independent of health status, lifestyle, and socioeconomic position. Psychosocial characteristics may be modifiable targets for dementia prevention.

See p. 2205

Effects of APOE ϵ 4, age, and HIV on glial metabolites and cognitive deficits

One hundred seventy-seven participants were assessed cross-sectionally using proton magnetic resonance spectroscopy to measure metabolite concentrations in 4 brain regions and using neuropsychological performance measures.

In frontal white matter of patients with HIV, the persistent elevation and lack of normal age-dependent increase in myo-inositol suggest that persistent glial activation attenuated the typical effects of APOE ϵ 4 on neuroinflammation.

See p. 2213

NB: "Identifying gaps in knowledge about Parkinson disease among medical professionals in Thailand," see p. 2238. To check out other Global Perspectives, point your browser to Neurology.org.

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