In Focus

Spotlight on the October 14 Issue

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Parkinson disease and smoking revisited: Ease of quitting is an early sign of the disease

The authors identified 1,808 patients with Parkinson disease (PD) and compared them to 1,876 controls. Fewer patients with PD than controls ever established a smoking habit. Among former smokers, those with greater difficulty quitting were less likely to develop PD, with the risk being lowest among those reporting "extremely difficult to quit" compared with "easy to quit."

See p. 1396

From editorialists Hershey & Perlmutter: "All of the past smoke about PD may have been a misinterpretation of the data. Where there is smoke, there may not be fire. That is the key message from Ritz et al."

See p. 1392

Effects of deep brain stimulation on pain and other nonmotor symptoms in Parkinson disease

Forty-four patients with Parkinson disease (PD) and refractory motor symptoms were screened for subthalamic nucleus deep brain stimulation (STN-DBS) and were evaluated before and 1 year after surgery. STN-DBS decreased pain after surgery, but had different effects in different types of PD-related pain. Motor and nonmotor symptom improvements after STN-DBS did not correlate with pain relief.

See p. 1403

Relation of DASH- and Mediterranean-like dietary patterns to cognitive decline in older persons

The authors assessed whether DASH (Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension) and Mediterranean diet (MedDiet) patterns (both have several common food components) were related to cognitive changes. A 1-unit difference in DASH score and MedDietScore was associated with slower rates of change, suggesting adoption of these diets may aid in slowing cognitive decline.

See p. 1410

Depression in small-vessel disease relates to white matter ultrastructural damage, not disability

Using cross-sectional data, the authors modeled the relationships among depression, disability, and quality of life in patients with small-vessel disease (SVD) presenting with radiologically confirmed lacunar stroke. These results suggest that in stroke patients without SVD-related disability, white matter damage was still an important causal factor for depression.

See p. 1417

Cerebrovascular reactivity predicts stroke in high-grade carotid artery disease

Identification of carotid stenosis patients at high stroke risk is a key challenge. This individual patient data meta-analysis showed that an impaired cerebral hemodynamic reserve, measured by a simple transcranial Doppler test, predicted future stroke. Doppler CO₂ reactivity may be a risk

assessment tool in carotid artery disease.

See p. 1424

Neuropsychological features in childhood and juvenile multiple sclerosis: Five-year follow-up

The authors assessed cognitive functioning in a cohort of patients with multiple sclerosis (MS) onset before the age of 18. After 5 years, cognitive deterioration was observed in 56% (males and patients with younger age at MS onset or lower education had higher risk), with improvement or stability in the remaining patients.

See p. 1432

"Mirror EPC": Epilepsia partialis continua shifting sides after rolandic resection in dysplasia

Medically refractory epilepsy partialis continua (EPC) is frequent in focal cortical dysplasia, and resective surgery is often considered. In 3 patients, EPC unexpectedly shifted sides, recurring in the other side of the body following resection and postoperative hemiplegia. Resection of dysplasia may be followed by EPC in the previously normal hemibody.

See p. 1439

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Why brain death is considered death and why there should be no confusion

Considerable public interest followed the diagnosis of the brain death of 13-year-old Jahi McMath. The authors summarize and interpret the medical, legal, and ethical conflicts in hopes of alleviating similar situations in the future.

See p. 1464; Editorial, p. 1394

NB: "Neurology mission(s) impossible," see p. 1450. To check out other Global Perspectives submissions, point your browser to Neurology.org.

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