Multifocal neuropathy associated with West Nile virus infection

A 51-year-old man developed severe, subacute onset right facial weakness and flaccid, hyporeflexic right upper limb weakness several days following West Nile virus infection. Electrophysiologic and radiographic studies confirmed severe but incomplete right facial and brachial plexus neuropathies (figure). There were no clinical or laboratory findings to suggest encephalitis or myelitis. For additional details regarding his diagnosis, see appendix e-1 on the Neurology® Web site at www.neurology.org.

Since its arrival in North America, West Nile virus infection has been associated with a number of neuromuscular manifestations, such as a poliomyelitis-like motor neuronopathy, Guillain-Barré syndrome, isolated brachial plexus neuropathy, and now multifocal neuropathy. MRI continues to emerge as a useful tool in the evaluation of neuromuscular disorders.

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Disclosure: Dr. Jones has received federal grant support. Dr. Sumner has nothing to disclose.

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Neurology 2008;71;1123
DOI 10.1212/01.wnl.0000326964.26673.8e

This information is current as of September 29, 2008

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