In Focus

Spotlight on the May 28 Issue

Robert A. Gross, MD, PhD, FAAN
Editor-in-Chief, *Neurology*®

***TNFRSF1A* polymorphisms rs1800693 and rs4149584 in patients with multiple sclerosis**

Polymorphisms in *TNFRSF1A*, the gene encoding tumor necrosis factor receptor 1, increase the risk for multiple sclerosis (MS). Two *TNFRSF1A* polymorphisms were investigated in MS, and they modulated disease severity (rs4149584) and had functional consequences in the receptor (rs1800693 and rs4149584).

See p. 2010; Editorial, p. 2002

Multifocal VZV vasculopathy with temporal artery infection mimics giant cell arteritis

Clinical features and laboratory abnormalities of multifocal varicella-zoster virus (VZV) vasculopathy with temporal artery (TA) infection mimic giant cell arteritis (GCA).

Immunohistochemistry revealed VZV antigen in 5/24 (21%) TAs from

patients with clinically suspect, pathologically negative GCA. Identification of VZV vasculopathy in GCA-negative TAs requires antiviral treatment, not corticosteroids that may potentiate VZV infection.

See p. 2017

Characterization of the Huntington intermediate CAG repeat expansion phenotype in PHAROS

The Prospective Huntington At Risk Observational Study (PHAROS) enrolled 1,001 unaffected participants who were at 50-50 risk for inheriting Huntington disease (HD) by having an affected parent or sibling. In this at-risk cohort, the intermediate CAG repeat expansion was associated with behavioral abnormalities but normal motor and cognition and may represent a prodromal stage of HD.

See p. 2022

From editorialist Andrew Feigin: "...the presence of IA [intermediate alleles] in the HD gene in as much as 6% of the general population and the association of this IA with subtle clinical signs of HD suggest that the HD gene mutation may have wider clinical relevance than previously thought."

See p. 2004

Thalamic glutamate/glutamine in restless legs syndrome: Increased and related to disturbed sleep

Proton magnetic resonance spectroscopy of the right thalamus was performed using a 1.5T GE MRI scanner and the PROBE-P on 28 patients with restless legs syndrome (RLS) and 20 controls. The primary findings introduced 2 new related dimensions to RLS: abnormalities in a major nondopaminergic neurologic system and the arousal disturbance of sleep.

See p. 2028; Editorial, p. 2006

Exposure to pesticides or solvents and risk of Parkinson disease

Using a critical approach to the studies available, the authors explained most of the heterogeneity in risk estimates of exposure to pesticides and solvents in affecting the risk of Parkinson disease. Patients need to be made aware of these findings to avoid further exposure to these compounds as treatments may be less effective than expected.

See p. 2035

Association of brain pathology with the progression of frailty in older adults

The authors tested brain pathology in 791 older adults participating in the Religious Orders Study and Memory and Aging Project. Postmortem indices of Alzheimer disease pathology, macroinfarcts, and nigral neuronal loss showed independent associations with the rate of progression of frailty.

See p. 2055

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Why our patients (and we) need basic science research

The future of neurologic therapeutics depends critically on "fuel" for the therapeutic pipeline. Training the next generation of neurologists depends on the substrate for honing analytical thought to ensure that the care of tomorrow's patients is better than we can even imagine today.

See p. 2070

NB: "Adult osteomalacia: A treatable cause of 'fear of falling' gait," see p. 2079. To check out other Video NeuroImages, point your browser to www.neurology.org.

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