In Focus

Spotlight on the October 17 issue

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Notable in Neurology

This issue features an article that demonstrates spinal cord perfusion pressure maintenance above 50 mm Hg as a strong predictor of improved neurologic recovery following spinal cord injury and another that explores the course of Unverricht-Lundborg disease (EPM1) to identify the risk factors for severity. A featured Historical Neurology article reviews the observations of Jules Dejerine, which describe the clinical and pathologic presentation of acute motor axonal neuropathy decades earlier than previously thought.

ARTICLES

Pretreatment behavior and subsequent medication effects in childhood absence epilepsy ▲

In a randomized double-blind trial, children with newly diagnosed absence epilepsy had a high rate of pretreatment behavioral problems, which persisted after treatment. Valproate, while effective in treating seizures, worsened behavior, which was not the case for ethosuximide or lamotrigine. Behavior is a factor to consider when selecting initial therapy.

See p. 1698

Serum magnesium is associated with the risk of dementia

In this study, serum magnesium levels were measured in Rotterdam Study participants free from dementia at baseline. The authors found that both low and high serum magnesium levels were associated with an increased risk of all-cause dementia. Clinicians should consider measuring serum magnesium levels on a routine basis.

See p. 1716

Smoking cessation and outcome after ischemic stroke or TIA

One in four patients with an acute ischemic stroke is a current smoker. This observational study provides evidence that smoking cessation, compared to continued smoking, reduces risk for subsequent stroke, myocardial infarction, or death by 34% over 5 years. Smoking cessation merits special emphasis when caring for patients after ischemic stroke.

See p. 1723

From editorialist Boehme: "This study highlights an important component of both clinical care of the stroke survivor and the public health component of the need for better interventions for lifestyle modification."

See p. 1656

Qualitative study of burnout, career satisfaction, and well-being among US neurologists in 2016 📺

The authors studied comments from 676 US neurologists on burnout, career satisfaction, and well-being using qualitative analytic techniques to extract common themes. Workload was the greatest driver of burnout, followed by erosion of professional identity and insurance and government mandates. Systemic factors affect physician well-being more than individual factors.

See p. 1730

From editorialists Khan and Bernat: "The knowledge gained from this and similar studies will inform the design of strategies to improve advocacy for our profession, prevent burnout, promote well-being, and increase engagement among neurologists."

See p. 1658

NB: "Fatigable ptosis as an initial presentation of adult-onset Leigh syndrome," p. 1754. To check out other NeuroImages, point your browser to Neurology.org. At the end of the issue, check out the Resident & Fellow Teaching NeuroImages discussing selective downgaze palsy caused by artery of Percheron thrombosis, another on the spontaneous involution of symptomatic delayed tumefactive cyst, and one disclosing the use of magnetic resonance neurography for hypertrophic neuropathy diagnosis. This week also includes a Resident & Fellow Teaching Video NeuroImages titled "My weeping patient: Avoiding the pitfalls of functional diagnosis."

Podcasts can be accessed at Neurology.org

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