were combined. The prevalence of anxiety disorders was 3-2% in the non-demented and 3-3% in the combined demented group. Psychotic (P = 21-1, df 1,962, P = 0-001) and depressive (P = 11-3, df 3,962, P < 0-001) disorders were more common in demented than in non-demented persons, whereas anxiety disorders showed no difference. No persons with moderate or severe dementia were diagnosed as having an anxiety disorder. Mean MMSE score in those with a diagnosed anxiety disorder was 25-2 (SD 3-1), with a range from 19 to 30. In those without a diagnosed anxiety disorder, the mean MMSE score was 25-5 (SD 4-5), with a range from 0 to 30. Notable was that of the 71 persons with an MMSE score < 18, none had an anxiety disorder.

A group of psychiatric disorders (OR = 9-8, 95% CI 9-0–0-6) and impaired activities of daily living (OR = 3-0, 95% CI 2-0–4-1) were found to correlate with having an anxiety disorder. The other potentially associated variables including manifest age, sex, institutionalisation, educational level, somatic disorders (cardiac, cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, or malignant), visual and hearing problems, or dementia were not found to correlate. No substantial differences were found if demented patients were excluded from the analysis.

The results indicate that anxiety disorders were diagnosed in 3-2% of this population of very elderly adults, and the prevalence was equally distributed in non-demented and demented groups. This finding is in agreement with the prevalence rate reported in the ECA, Edmonton studies, and the CMA's age concern survey.11-13 Moreover, the present study found that in those persons who were moderate or severely demented, anxiety disorders were not present. A MMSE score of at least 18 seemed to be critical for the presence of an anxiety disorder. This might have been a reflection of the fact that those participants with more severe cognitive dysfunction (the criterion hypothesis) by contrast, the instrument in use seemed to be able to diagnose depressive and psychotic disorders, even if the person had reached a more severe level of dementia. The high prevalence of the diagnostic symptoms and criteria might also have influenced the fact that the prevalence of depression exceeded the prevalence of anxiety disorders.

The study found to correlate with having a history of psychiatric disorders and impaired activities of daily living. This supports the statement by Lindesay4 that restriction of activity and imposed independence may cause anxiety.

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YVONNE FORSELL
BENGT WINBLAD
Stockholm Gerontology Research Centre and Department of Geriatric Medicine, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden

Correspondence to: Dr Y Forsell, Stockholm Gerontology Research Center, Orebrovena 4, S-113 82 Stockholm, Sweden.

Prevalence (%) of anxiety, depressive, and psychotic disorders by dementia severity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disorder</th>
<th>Non-demented (n = 786)</th>
<th>Questionable (n = 38)</th>
<th>Mild (n = 84)</th>
<th>Moderate/severe (n = 38)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>3-2 (25)</td>
<td>5-2 (3)</td>
<td>3-6 (3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressive</td>
<td>5-5 (43)</td>
<td>12-1 (7)</td>
<td>20-2 (17)</td>
<td>21 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychotic</td>
<td>0 (3)</td>
<td>3-4 (2)</td>
<td>10-7 (9)</td>
<td>5 (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actual numbers of patients are given in parentheses.

Ataxic type of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease with disproportionate enlargement of the fourth ventricle: a serial CT study

There are few reported neuroimaging studies on the ataxic type of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. In our patient MRI and serial CT disclosed a progressive enlargement of the four ventricles as a major finding.

A 64 year old woman developed progressive gait unsteadiness in June 1994; she was then evaluated in another hospital where neurological examination (brain MRI was unavailable to us) were reported as normal. She had no history of neurosurgery or ocular surgery or family history of neurological disease. Examination in September 1994 showed a gait ataxia and gaze nystagmus without dysarthria. Routine laboratory investigations and tumour markers were normal or negative. Analysis of CSF including IgG content was normal, oligoclonal bands were not detected. Brain CT (figure, A, B) was normal for the patient's age. An EEG showed slowing of background activity. As there was no evidence of systemic cancer or other known aetiologies for cerebellar degeneration, a diagnosis of idiopathic late onset cerebellar ataxia was made. Two months later there was rapid intellectual decline with complex hallucinations, emotional changes, disorientation, and confusion; and development of a vegetative state within a few weeks. Multifocal axial and appendicular myoclonus was now present. Serial waking-sleep EEG showed progressive slowing of background activity with occasional periodic complexes. Serial CT (figure, C-F) showed progressive cerebellar and brain atrophy with pronounced enlargement of the fourth ventricular. The transverse diameter of the fourth ventricular was first, second, and third examination were 1-3, 1-9, and 2-5 cm (normal value 1-44 (SD 0-22)). The brainstem ratio was normal in all three CT studies (for the last 0-19 (control value 0-22 (0-04)). An MRI study in November 1994 corroborated the CT findings and neither brainstem atrophy nor abnormal signal of white matter or basal ganglia were noted. Two specific proteins p105 and p130 were not detected by gel electrophoresis of CSF and CSF neuron-specific enolase was significantly increased at 240 ng/ml (upper limit of normal 50 ng/l). T 231 University of Göttingen, Germany, personal communication). The patient died in February 1995.

Necropsy, restricted to the nervous system, was performed six hours after death. The brain weight (1150 g) was of normal external appearance. On section the ventricular system, especially the fourth ventricle, was seen to be enlarged and both the cerebral cortex and the cerebellar cortex were atrophic. Microscopically there was widespread spongy degeneration throughout the grey matter and basal ganglia, most pronounced in the frontal and occipital cortex, and subcortical white matter. In the cerebellum there was considerable loss of granule cells with relative preservation of Purkinje cells that often exhibited axonal "torpedoes". The white matter was gliotic to very gliotic, diagnostic brain stains demonstrated no evidence of demyelination. Kuru-like plaques were not found. Spongy degeneration was also seen in the molecular layer and the brainstem, but the olivary and spinal tracts were not demyelinated and there was no cell loss in the pontine and inferior olivary nuclei. Prion protein analysis was not performed.
CSF findings were highly suggestive of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. There were extensive spongy changes in the grey matter and an almost complete loss of granule cells in the cerebellum. This is the hallmark of the ataxic type of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

Brain MRI and serial CT disclosed slight but progressive cerebral and cerebellar atrophy and dilatation of the ventricular system. In Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, including its ataxic form, CT may be normal or show atrophy and ventricular dilatation. As described here, serial CT and MRI illustrate progression of the atrophic process. Despite the evidence of pathological involvement of the basal ganglia, no abnormal MRI signal of the striatum and thalamus was noted. Serial examination using "FD fluodeoxyglucose and PET has shown that there may be considerable cerebral hypometabolism when no parenchymal abnormalities are present on MRI.

A major neuroimaging finding was the greatly enlarged fourth ventricle without brainstem atrophy, and certainly disproportionate to the degree of cerebellar wasting. This is a unique pattern of cerebellar atrophy. In familial or idiopathic late onset cerebellar ataxia increase in size of the fourth ventricle is regularly accompanied by severe cerebellar hemispheric and vermian atrophy, or abnormal brainstem, or both. We previously reported a patient with a panencephalopathic and ataxic type of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease and a similar pattern of posterior fossa atrophy. Taking common pathological findings of our two patients into account, atrophy of the cerebellar granular layer was most probably the cause of enlargement of the fourth ventricle. Preferential degeneration of granule cells is exceptional in human pathology and occurs in Minamata disease and granule cell layer hypoplasia. Intriguingly, in both disorders neuroimaging techniques have shown enlargement of the fourth ventricle and cerebellar atrophy without wasting of either pons or middle cerebellar peduncles. This finding seems important for the differential diagnosis between syndromes with selective granule cell pathology and olivopontocerebellar atrophy.

Because of its subacute clinical course, the ataxic type of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease should be distinguished from paraneoplastic cerebellar degeneration, in which neuroimaging abnormalities are uncommon when CT is performed four months after onset but are present on half of the scans obtained more than four months later. Cerebellar and brain atrophy and foci of increased T2 signal in cerebral and cerebellar white matter are the neuroimaging hallmark of paraneoplastic cerebellar degeneration. Brainstem atrophy or fourth ventricle enlargement is exceptional, and to the best of our knowledge the pattern of posterior fossa atrophy seen here has never been described in paraneoplastic cerebellar degeneration.

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J BERCIANO
J PASCUAL
O COMBARROS
J FIGOLS
M DIEZ
Department of Neuroradiology, University Hospital "Marqués de Valdecilla", 39008 Santander, Spain

Letters to the Editor

The initial manifestation in our patient was an isolated cerebellar syndrome. Five months after onset the classic features of dementia and myoclonus were present. Only just before death EEG recordings showed characteristic periodic complexes, and...
Ferréol-Benlier disease with associated recurrent meningitis

We report an unusual case of a recurrent cutaneous syndrome regularly associated with a lymphomocytary meningitis. A 40 year old white man presented with a complaint of throat pain and a burning sensation on the inside of the hands and feet starting three days previously, followed a day later by fever and severe headache. Neurological examination was unremarkable except for meningism. On the inside of both hands and feet extensive reddening and early desquamation were noted. Examination of CSF showed normal protein, lactate, and sugar content, no local IgG synthesis, and 216 µl, 80% of which were lymphocytes and monocytes with a high proportion of large, fragile endothelial cells; 20% were polymuclear cells and about half of these were eosinophils. No infectious agent, including hepatitis B and herpes simplex viruses, was demonstrated serologically, in culture or by virus isolation. Antibody studies for connective tissue disease, T cell differential count, streptolysin titres, complement levels, and electrophoresis for immunoglobulin were normal.

Fever and headache subsided within four days. Two days later, extensive desquamation with almost complete shedding of palmar and plantar skin occurred (figure). The patient had had six similar attacks since 1986 with intervals from seven to 18 months. All episodes started with throat pain and a burning sensation on palmar and plantar skin, followed by fever and headache that subsided within days, accompanied by extensive desquamation of affected skin, on two occasions also of several nails. Neurological abnormalities other than meningism were not found. Brain CT and MRI were normal on the several occasions that they were done. No leak was demonstrated on CSF scintigraphy. During five episodes a lymphocytic CSF pleocytosis was documented. No infectious agent was isolated. On two occasions a slight transient proteinuria was noted. The patient was well between attacks, had no skin abnormalities in the intervals, and did not require regular medication.

The cutaneous syndrome conforms to the rare clinical entity of erythema scarlatiniforme desquamativum recidivans of Ferréol-Benlier. It is characterised by recurrent attacks of a prodromal phase with head and muscle aches, gastrointestinal and enteritic syndromes, and fever, followed by a macular erythema leading to the pathognomonic desquamation and scalping of palmar and plantar skin.1 Patients are symptom free during the intervals, which may last from weeks to several years. About 40 definite cases have been reported since the disease was described in 1878. Localised variants in which only the hands and feet are involved correspond precisely to the cutaneous syndrome found here.1 Throat pain and transient proteinuria, unusual for recurrent meningitis, are common. The aetiology is unknown, but abnormal cutaneous reaction to an infectious disease has been proposed as the cause in some cases.1 No infectious agent was isolated. Connective tissue diseases, immunosuppression, and uveomeningitic syndromes were excluded by clinical presentation and appropriate laboratory studies.

Interestingly, the CSF cytology, with a mixed lymphomocytary pleocytosis with large fragile endothelial cells, conforms to the picture seen in benign recurrent aseptic meningitis (Mollaret meningitis).2 An unusual feature was the high number of eosinophils, rarely reported in this disease.3 The clear association in this case of Ferréol-Benlier disease with recurrent CSF lymphocytosis has no precedent in the literature. However, we located two patients presenting with an urticarial rash during episodes of recurrent meningitis. In these cases possible aetiologies were lymphoma4 and familial Mediterranean fever.5 These diagnoses should be borne in mind when confronting a patient with the rare picture of recurrent meningitis associated with cutaneous symptoms.

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ANDREAS MEYER-LINDENBERG
Centre for Psychiatry, Justus-Liebig-University Medical School, Giessen, Germany
MICHAEL HOTZ
Department of Neurology, State Clinic of the Rhine, Bonn, Germany

Correspondence to: Dr Andreas Meyer-Lindenberg, Zentrum für Psychiatrie, Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen, Am Steg 22, 35385 Gießen, Germany.

Ataxic type of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease with disproportionate enlargement of the fourth ventricle: a serial CT study.
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