

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDERS

THYROID FUNCTION AND ADHD

Routine thyroid function studies in a community referred sample of boys with ADHD were examined for evidence of generalized resistance to thyroid hormone at the National Institute of Mental Health, Bethesda, MD. TSH, T3, and T4 values in 53 subjects were not in the range suggestive of global or pituitary thyroid hormone resistance, and variability of values was not greater in ADHD subjects compared to 41 normal controls. Motor activity measured by an actometer was increased as T4 values increased ($P=.06$). (Elia J, Rapoport JL et al. Thyroid function and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry Feb 1994;**33**:169-172). (Reprints: Dr Rapoport, Child Psychiatry Branch, National Institute of Mental Health, Bldg 10, Rm 6N240, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20892).

COMMENT. The authors conclude that a generalized resistance to thyroid hormone (GRTH) is rare, and thyroid function should not be measured routinely in nonfamilial ADHD. Another recent study from the National Institutes of Health, by endocrinologists, had shown that 70% of children with GRTH met criteria for ADHD. (Hauser et al, 1993; see Ped Neur Briefs April 1993;**7**:25). Impairments of cognition, attention, and behavior may be seen with hyperthyroidism. The correlation between motor activity and serum T4 values in the above study is of interest and deserves further study, if not routine examination in ADHD.

NEUROCUTANEOUS SYNDROMES

AUTISM AND ADHD IN TUBEROUS SCLEROSIS

In a population-based psychiatric study of 28 patients with tuberous sclerosis (TS) at the University of Goteborg, Sweden, 24 had autistic symptoms and 17 met all DSM-III-R criteria for autistic disorder (AD). Of the 17 with AD, 7 were severely mentally retarded, 7 had mild retardation, 3 were near average IQ, and 11 had ADHD. One girl of average IQ had Asperger syndrome. Only 3 were free of psychiatric/behavioral problems, all having average IQs. Of the 24 with autistic behavior, 14 had a history of infantile spasms. Infantile spasms were not specifically associated with later development of autistic behavior. TS predisposes to both autism and infantile spasms. Nine per cent of all children and 20% of females with autism may have TS. Autistic behavior in children < 5 years of age has a stronger correlation with TS than facial angiofibromas, a sign often not clearly defined until later childhood. (Gillberg IC et al. Autistic behavior and attention deficits in tuberous sclerosis: a population-based study. Dev Med Child Neurol Jan 1994;**36**:50-56). (Respond: Christopher Gillberg MD, Annedal Clinics, Child Neuropsychiatry Clinic, University of Goteborg, S-413 45 Goteborg, Sweden).

COMMENT. An epidemiological study of TS in Western Sweden by the same authors showed a peak prevalence of 1 in 6800 in the 11 to 15 year-old age group, almost double that reported in earlier studies. In the whole cohort, 0-20 years, the prevalence was 1 in 12900. (Ahlsten G, Gillberg IC et al. Tuberous sclerosis in Western Sweden. Arch Neurol Jan 1994;**51**:76-81).