



MS in kids: Less disabling, more lesions

Published: Nov. 17, 2009 at 1:53 PM

BUFFALO, N.Y., Nov. 17 (UPI) -- U.S. researchers say despite being less disabling, multiple sclerosis in children causes more disease activity.

Multiple sclerosis causes demyelination -- a break in the myelin sheath protecting nerve fibers -- that impedes electrical impulses causing loss of sensation and coordination. The researchers found magnetic resonance imaging showed pediatric MS patients had more demyelination -- a greater number of lesions -- despite delays of almost 10 years in reaching the next stage of disability.

"These findings are somewhat surprising, considering we have assumed that children generally have a greater capacity for central nervous tissue repair," corresponding author Dr. Bianca Weinstock-Guttman of the University at Buffalo says in a statement.

The study, published in the journal *Brain*, suggests children may have a somewhat better functional adaptability than adults but less support for remyelination and points to a need for early diagnosis and therapeutic intervention in pediatric MS patients.

The researchers examined pediatric MS patients -- 17 children diagnosed two to three years ago, 33 young adults diagnosed 20 years earlier and middle-aged MS patients diagnosed as adults -- 81 with the disease for two to three years and 300 adults for 20 years.

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