

third of patients. Tachycardia, agitation, and lethargy are the most frequent symptoms. Accidental ingestion is more common than intentional exposure, and therapeutic error occurs most frequently during the 6 to 11 year-old period. The potential for the development of lethargy and impaired consciousness argues against the use of syrup of ipecac or charcoal in prehospital recommended treatment measures.

HERITABILITY OF ADHD

A twin study design was used to examine the the genetic validity of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)-related phenotypes. Parent-rated symptoms were reported by questionnaires received for 2082 twin pairs, and teacher-rated symptoms were available for 1470 twin pairs. Parent-rated, teacher-rated, and both parent and teacher-rated ADHD categories were highly heritable. Shared environmental effects were found for teacher-rated ADHD. ADHD reported by both parent and teacher is as heritable as ADHD symptoms defined only by maternal reports. A common genetic factor influences maternal and teacher-rated ADHD but not all teacher-rated ADHD. Teacher reports alone may be distinct from parent-rated ADHD, since they are influenced by shared environmental factors and by additional genetic and nonshared environmental factors. (Thapar A, Harrington R, Ross K, McGuffin P. Does the definition of ADHD affect heritability? J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry Dec 2000;39:1528-1536). (Respond: Dr Thapar, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Section, Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Wales College of Medicine, Heath Park, Cardiff, Wales, UK CF14 4XN).

COMMENT. Broadly defined pervasive (both parent and teacher-rated) ADHD symptoms are as heritable as ADHD behaviors defined by maternal reports alone. A common genetic factor influences maternally rated and teacher rated ADHD. ADHD symptoms are highly heritable.

Dopamine D4 receptor gene and ADHD. Linkage of the dopamine D4 receptor gene and ADHD is supported by further studies at Toronto Western Hospital (Sunohara GA, Roberts W, Malone M et al. J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry Dec 2000;39:1537-1542).

Is ADHD a noradrenergic disorder? This topic is reviewed by Biederman J and Spencer TJ (J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry Oct 2000;39:1330). Data implicate norepinephrine dysfunction and frontosubcortical pathways that control attention and motor behavior. Drugs with anti-ADHD activity share a common noradrenergic/dopaminergic activity.

ROLE OF TEMPORAL LOBE IN AUTISM

Regional cerebral blood flow was measured with positron emission tomography (PET) in 21 school-aged children with primary autism and in 10 nonautistic children with idiopathic mental retardation, at the Institut National de la Sante, Tours, and Hopital La Salpetriere, Paris, France. A highly significant hypoperfusion was noted in both temporal lobes, centered in auditory and adjacent cortex, in 76% of autistic children. (Zilbovicius M, Boddart N, Belin P et al. Temporal lobe dysfunction in childhood autism: a PET study. Am J Psychiatry Dec 2000;157:1988-1993). (Reprints: Dr Zilbovicius, Commissariat a l'Energie Atomique, Service Hospitalier Frederic Joliot, 4 place du General Leclerc, 91406, Orsay, France).

COMMENT. Hypoperfusion in the temporal lobes of children with primary autism suggests a temporal lobe dysfunction as the basis for the variety of