

ALTERNATIVE VIEWPOINTS

Autoimmunity and Schizophrenia

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In a recent article Goldsmith and Rogers, investigate the case for autoimmunity and the causation for schizophrenia. Their basic assumptions, that the “evidence for autoimmunity is not conclusive and that difficulties arise in the trying to assign causation of symptoms and/or pathology to any of these antibodies...” may be correct.¹

Schizophrenia like other psychiatric disorders is diagnosed based on somewhat specific and subjective findings that are not otherwise explained.²

If patient’s symptoms are severe enough to meet the diagnostic criteria of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th Edition Text Revised (DSM IV-TR) for a diagnosis of schizophrenia, the patient will most likely be prescribed antipsychotic medications.

In their investigation Goldsmith and Rogers do not discuss the basic difference of antipsychotic pharmacotherapy between the two study groups. In review of the information presented and assuming that the control subjects were not taking any antipsychotic medications, the various autoantibodies in patients diagnosed as having schizophrenia may have resulted from injury and immune response due to antipsychotic medications.

comments of Dr. Ambrosini. We agree that it is difficult to determine if changes in immune function parameters are causative of schizophrenia or a physiological response to antipsychotic medications themselves. Many of the studies reviewed did include patients receiving antipsychotic medication. While some of these investigations found elevated levels of autoantibodies and other immunologic mediators, others did not. In addition, certain medications (i.e., rofecoxib) added to an antipsychotic regimen resulted in a greater clinical response. Therefore, we still recommend that the immune effects of various medications, whether antipsychotics or other, be examined further in at least a subset of patients with the disease.

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Donald P. Rogers, Pharm.D.

References

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Authors' Reply

We acknowledge and appreciate the insightful

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