

Cytokines and SIDS. Pro-inflammatory cytokines are found in the brainstem of infants dying from SIDS, and an increase in IL-6 has been demonstrated in the CSF. The limitations of these findings in the etiology of SIDS is discussed by Waters KA. (**Lancet Neurology** February 2004;3:81).

NEONATAL CEREBRAL INFARCTION AND NEUROMOTOR DYSFUNCTION

Twenty-two children with cerebral infarction on neonatal MRI were examined neurologically at school age in a study at Imperial College School of Medicine, Hammersmith, London, UK. Six (30%) had hemiplegia and an additional 7 (30%) had neuromotor abnormalities, including asymmetries. The remaining 9 had normal motor function. Hemiplegia occurred only in patients showing neonatal MRI evidence of hemisphere, internal capsule, and basal ganglia involvement. (Mercuri E, Barnett A, Rutherford M et al. Neonatal cerebral infarction and neuromotor outcome at school age. **Pediatrics** January 2004;113:95-100). (Respond: Eugenio Mercuri MD, Department of Paediatrics, Imperial College School of Medicine, Hammersmith, London, UK).

COMMENT. In children suffering a neonatal cerebral infarction, signs of neuromotor impairment become more obvious at school age when the neurologic examination is more structured.

Risk of recurrent stroke in children and antiphospholipid screening are reviewed from the University of California, San Francisco (Fullerton HJ, von Scheven E. Editorial. **Neurology** January (2 of 2);62:172-173; and Lanthier S et al. **Neurology** 204;62:194-200). Lanthier et al found no difference in recurrence rates between the anticardiolipin antibody (aCL)-positive and aCL-negative groups, when 185 children with a first arterial ischemic stroke or TIA were followed for a median of 3 years. However, aCL-positive children were more likely to be treated with antithrombotic agent, and treated patients were less likely to have a recurrence. In the absence of a prospective randomized trial, screening for antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) should continue as a routine component of the evaluation of arterial ischemic stroke and risk of recurrence.

Subsequent publication of the results of the antiphospholipid antibodies and stroke study (APASS), a prospective double-blind cohort study involving 1770 participants from multiple US clinical sites (**JAMA** Feb 4, 2004;291:576-584), concludes that the presence of aCL in patients with ischemic stroke does not predict an increased risk of subsequent stroke. Routine screening for aPL in patients with ischemic stroke may not be warranted. The debate continues.

SEIZURE DISORDERS

EFFECTS OF AEDs ON SERUM NITRITE AND NITRATE LEVELS

Serum nitrite and nitrate levels were determined in 34 epileptic children treated with valproic acid and 23 with carbamazepine and compared to 38 non-active epileptic children