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Fever as a predictive factor in the autism spectrum disorders

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Abstract

Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) display a marked increase nowadays and there is considerable research interest in determining factors which are associated with the disorder.

Literature data indicate that there are differences in susceptibility to various infections between normal and autistic children. In addition, some autistic children show improvement in their behavior during febrile incident and repression of fever (through antipyretics) might be associated with the onset of autism. Since fever has been associated with mental illness since the time of Hippocrates already and the presence of fever is associated with a favorable outcome in various pathologic conditions, it is assumed that there are two subgroups of autistic children: those who have the possibility to develop acute febrile incidents and those who develop acute incidents without fever. If this is the case, it is important to know whether there are differences between the two subgroups in various biomarkers and, if the first subgroup consists of autistic people of higher functionality and better outcome, or not. If such a classification is real, is there a possibility for the fever to be used as a predictor of the autism outcome and of whether that person will achieve an acceptable level of functionality in the future? If there are positive answers to these questions, are autistic children, who develop fever, at a very critical stage in evolutionary terms, where it is very important not to lose the defense mechanism of fever development and thus must use the fever repression methods (antipyretics) with caution? If it is confirmed that autistic children with high fevers are of higher functionality, it is possible for preventive intervention programs to be developed where children are exposed to the least possible chemical drugs intervention or even selective vaccination. Further experimental, epidemiological and clinical studies are necessary to investigate the above.

Biography

Amalia Megremi graduated from Medical School in University of Athens-Greece with excellent mark. She wins two scholarships during her studies. Amalia received her first Master of Science in Health Informatics at the University of Athens with excellent mark and her second Master of Science in Holistic Alternative Therapeutic Systems at the University of Aegean-Greece with excellent mark too. She is specialized in Pediatrics and currently serves as a Head Pediatrician at the Ilion Socio-Medical Center (University Hospital “Attikon”, Athens). She presented her research findings at national and international conferences and journals and she is reviewer for international medical journals. Amalia interested in autism, immunology, infectious diseases and alternative medicine.