

Multiple Hopes for Multiple Sclerosis

Voice-over 1:

Multiple sclerosis affects the ability of nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord to communicate with each other. Severe cases result in permanent disability.

Voice-over 2:

There are two parallel processes in this disease. First there's an inflammatory process, which is chronic and stays in the patients for life. At the same time, there's a neurodegenerative process when patients lose different components of their central nervous systems. This neurodegeneration is very likely linked to the inflammatory process.

Voice-over 1:

Researchers at the Italian Institute of Health coordinate a European Union research project aimed at developing new therapeutic strategies to treat patients. Biologists first had to get a better understanding of the complex mechanisms behind the development of the disease. Molecular analysis of damaged tissues confirmed that inflammation of the nervous system somehow sparks the neurodegenerative process.

Voice-over 2:

We can for instance analyse lesions inside plaques of the central nervous system of patients. We can not only confirm the existence of these lesions but also their extension. And we can somehow establish how those lesions are connected to the presence of cells from the inflammatory system.

Voice-over 1:

Researchers now know better how the disease evolves, but they're still unsure how it emerges and why it affects some people while sparing others.

Voice-over 2:

We still don't know what causes this disease. What we do know is that genes and environment interact in a complex way in the development of multiple sclerosis.

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