Mental Illness Might Be Early Feature of Multiple Sclerosis

People with multiple sclerosis (MS) were about 58% and 91% more likely to experience a psychiatric condition—such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia—than those without the condition in the 5 years before characteristic MS symptoms began, according to 2 analyses involving 44,228 total participants in Canada.

Moreover, the number of visits participants had with psychiatrists and psychotropic medications they received increased each of the 5 years before the onset of MS, as did the number of psychiatric-related hospital admissions.

The findings suggest that psychiatric conditions that arise before MS diagnosis “may be one piece of the MS prodrome puzzle and a potential signal when combined with other factors,” study author Anibal Chertcoff, MD, said in a statement.

— Emily Harris

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Note: Source references are available through embedded hyperlinks in the article text online.