

HTLV-I retrovirus in Chile: study on 140 neurological patients Retrovirus HTLV-1 en Chile: estudio en 140 enfermos neurológicos.

Cartier,

Araya,

Castillo,

Verdugo,

Mora,

Gajdusek,

Gibbs,

We screened 140 patients with different neurological diseases for the presence of anti HTLV-1 virus antibodies. ELISA test confirmed with Western Blot analysis was performed in CSF and blood.

Positive findings were obtained in 23 out of 52 patients with progressive spastic paraparesis (44%).

All patients with multiple sclerosis, polymyositis, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or chronic polyneuropathy were negative. Patients with progressive spastic paraparesis and positive HTLV-1 antibodies were most commonly women (78%) and middle aged (mean 46 years old), with a history of surgical interventions (70%) or blood transfusion (35%). A slowly progressive spastic paraparesis with asymmetric onset and minimal sensory complaints was observed in some cases. Mononuclear pleocytosis in the CSF was observed in 35% with an increased IgG index in 88%. A delayed latency and low amplitude of somatosensory evoked potentials was observed in 89% of patients.