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Clinical Abstract:

This 19 year old man was a long term resident of a chronic care institution. He was the product of a normal pregnancy and delivery, but apparently acquired a measles infection and encephalitis (details and sequence of events not known) in early childhood. This disease progressed to render him quadriplegic with a seizure disorder. For the remainder of his life he was unable to communicate and could only grunt. Eye movements were present. He was bedridden, had flexion contractures and required total nursing care. He was treated with multiple anticonvulsants.

His clinical course was marked by numerous respiratory infections, and he succumbed to pneumonia at the age of nineteen.

At autopsy the brain weighed 600 gram. The ventricles were markedly dilated, and the white matter was the site of numerous shrunken, grey, often translucent, illdefined lesions. The entire brain, including brainstem and cerebellum, was shrunken and atrophic.

Material submitted: 1 H & E stained section from the anterior basal ganglia.
1 Kodachrome from rostral brainstem tegmentum (dorsal raphe nucleus) in silver stain (LFB-Bielschowsky).

Points for Discussion: Diagnosis
Pathogenesis of nerve cell changes