



April 2009

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Patient Care

Neuro Specialists Battle Glioblastomas

The average survival rate for patients with a glioblastoma, treated aggressively, is about 14 months. A glioblastoma, a "[grow-and-go](#)" tumor, grows at an extremely rapid rate, but it also moves to new sites within the brain. Mayo clinicians and researchers are addressing both the growth and movement properties of glioblastomas.

Surgical Management of Intractable Seizures in Children

One in five children with [epilepsy have intractable seizures](#) — defined as failure to respond to at least two appropriate antiseizure medications. Surgery may be an option, but the path to that decision is complex.

Neurointerventionalist Neurosurgeons Join Mayo

In the past few years, an increasing number of neurosurgeons are also training to become [neurointerventionalists](#). This change has been reflected at Mayo Clinic, where two dual-trained neurosurgeons, [Ricardo Hanel, M.D.](#), and [Giuseppe Lanzino, M.D.](#), have joined the Mayo staff in Florida and Minnesota, respectively.

Statins Lower Stroke Severity, Improve Recovery

Mayo Clinic researchers have shown that patients who were [taking statins before a stroke](#) experienced better outcomes and recovery than patients who weren't on the drug — even when their cholesterol levels were ideal.

[Video of Wyatt Decker, M.D., explaining the study](#)

Mayo Physicians Discuss Studies on New Video Blog

Mayo Clinic experts explain new findings on the Physicians Update Video Blog. New videos are posted regularly. Current topics:

- [Frequency of New-Onset Pathologic Compulsive Gambling or Hypersexuality After Drug Treatment of Idiopathic Parkinson Disease](#)
- [Posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome](#)

Research

Parkinsonism: A Microtubule Railroad System Derailed?

A gene mutation in the brain, called dynactin, is exposing [how cells transport molecular cargo](#). Mayo-led researchers discovered the mutation in people with a rare type of parkinsonism, called Perry syndrome. They imagined it as a network of crisscrossing railroad tracks, with the mutation causing cargo to be loaded on a train with faulty brakes. The mechanism may cause many forms of Parkinson's disease.

Exercising the Brain to Prevent Memory Loss

A new Mayo Clinic study found that [engaging in cognitive activities](#) like reading books, playing games or crafting in middle age or later life is associated with a decreased risk of mild cognitive impairment (MCI). MCI is a transitional state between normal aging and the earliest features of Alzheimer's disease.

[Video of Yonas Geda, M.D., explaining the study](#)

Restoring Breathing After Spinal Cord Injury

Mayo researchers are collaborating in the laboratory to understand [how to restore breathing function](#) to patients who would otherwise be tethered to mechanical ventilators for life. Using an animal model of spinal cord injury (SCI), they are the first to show enhancement of spontaneous recovery of breathing by infusing neurotrophins (growth factors) into the spinal cord — a novel therapy that could translate to newfound independence for thousands of SCI patients.

Improving Brain Processing Speed Helps Memory

Mayo Clinic researchers found that healthy, older adults who participated in a [computer-based training program](#) to improve the speed and accuracy of brain processing showed twice the improvement in certain aspects of memory, compared to a control group.

Education

Neurology in Clinical Practice

July 16-18, 2009

A comprehensive three-day course directed at practitioners who see patients with a broad range of neurologic disorders. The course is intended to provide a review of Neurology with an emphasis on case-based presentations, recent advances and evidence-based approaches.

Location: InterContinental, Chicago

Contact: 1-800-323-2688 (toll free) or cme@mayo.edu

[Brochure](#)

Pediatric Neurology Update

Aug. 7, 2009

This one-day course will consist of a series of lectures by prominent child neurologists. It will address diagnosis and management issues of childhood neurological disorders commonly encountered by primary care providers.

Location: Phillips Hall, Siebens Building, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.

Contact: 1-800-323-2688 (toll free) or cme@mayo.edu

[Registration](#)

Mayo Clinic Stroke and Cerebrovascular Disease Review

Sept. 11-13, 2009

Lectures will cover the latest in management of acute ischemic stroke and brain hemorrhage, as well as asymptomatic vascular lesions, including arteriovenous malformations, cavernous malformations, cerebral aneurysms, and carotid stenosis. The course will also cover the latest diagnostic and therapeutic approaches to brain attack and review the major single-gene disorders that cause stroke.

Location: Ritz Carlton, Amelia Island, Fla.

Contact: 1-800-462-9633 (toll free) or cme@mayo.edu

[Brochure](#)

[Registration](#)

[See all Neurology and Neurosurgery Continuing Medical Education courses.](#)

Other News

New Parkinson's Disease Treatment Guide

A new book, *The Parkinson's Disease Treatment Guide for Physicians* ([Oxford University Press](#)), provides clear treatment guidelines for physicians that simplify options and assure the best treatment possible for each patient. The book is written by [J. Eric Ahlskog, Ph.D., M.D.](#), a Mayo Clinic neurologist and Parkinson's disease specialist.

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