

# Autism Linked to Brain Inflammation

Nov. 16, 2004 -

- [Getting To Psoriasis Through The Immune System](#)
- [The Importance of Neutralizing Antibodies in MS](#)
- [Coping With HIV Drugs: A Personal Story](#)
- [Multiple Sclerosis 101](#)
- [Understanding Psoriasis](#)

#### Health Library:

Select a Health Topic 

TUESDAY, Nov. 16 (HealthDayNews) – People with autism are prone to brain inflammation associated with immune system dysfunction, say researchers at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

They found evidence that immune mechanisms associated with inflammation are consistently switched on in people with autism.

"These findings reinforce the theory that immune activation in the brain is involved in autism, although it is not yet clear whether it is destructive or beneficial, or both, to the developing brain," study senior author Dr. Carlos A. Pardo-Villamizar said in a prepared statement.

He and his colleagues examined brain tissue from 11 people with autism, aged 5 to 44 years, who had died of either accidents or injuries. They found that, compared with brains from non-autistic individuals, the brains of people with autism showed signs of immune system activation and inflammation.

"This ongoing inflammatory process was present in different areas of the brain and [was] produced by cells known as microglia and astroglia," Pardo explained.

The research appears in the November 15 online edition of the *Annals of Neurology*.

"These findings open new possibilities for understanding the dynamic changes that occur in the brain of autistic patients during childhood and adulthood," Pardo said. "Although they may lend themselves to development of new medical treatments for autism, much more research would be needed to establish the validity of this approach."

#### More information

The U.S. National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke has more about [autism](#).

*Copyright 2004 HealthDayNews, Inc. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.*