

FACT PATTERN

Patient develops Chronic Juvenile Myelopathy ("CJM") with an onset 10 days after flu vaccine. CJM is a chronic disease with periods of wellness interlaced with periods of illness. He recalls no illnesses within two months. Scientific literature has been speculating that CJM might be "immune-mediated," that is: resulting from a patient's immune system responding to an infection. The basis for this hypothesis is reports showing that approximately 40% of patients recount a prior history of illness and a few recount vaccination. Nevertheless, we also know that CJM occurs spontaneously -- that is, in approximately 60% of cases, no identifiable antecedent event is reported. It is also known that almost all people receiving flu vaccine do not develop this condition as shown by only five case reports in the medical literature.

CJM has been shown in studies to be "significantly associated" with Epstein- Barr virus ("EBV") infection (15% of patients with CJM had positive EBV titers). Nevertheless, there is no evidence that the patient suffered EBV or any illnesses within the past two months. CJM presents with the same symptoms whether it occurs spontaneously, after EBV, or after flu vaccination.

Questions for Panel 1:

Does the evidence demonstrate that flu vaccine more likely than not causes CJM?

Same Questions with Additional Fact:

A large epidemiological study was done to investigate a possible relationship between CJM and flu vaccine. The study results indicated relative risk of CJM following exposure to flu vaccine as indicated by the chart below:

Same Question with Second Additional Fact:

There is one case report which reported a recurrence of CJM after consecutive flu vaccinations one year apart. The documentation in that case,

however, was poor because the laboratory data suggestive of an immune reaction was not supplied and the diagnosis was not verified.

Risk of CJM after Vaccination

