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Encephalitis Lethargica

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)

Source

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). *Encephalitis Lethargica Information Page*.

Encephalitis lethargica is a disease characterized by high fever, headache, double vision, delayed physical and mental response, and lethargy. In acute cases, patients may enter coma. Patients may also experience abnormal eye movements, upper body weakness, muscular pains, tremors, neck rigidity, and behavioral changes including psychosis. The cause of encephalitis lethargica is unknown. Between 1917 to 1928, an epidemic of encephalitis lethargica spread throughout the world, but no recurrence of the epidemic has since been reported. Postencephalitic Parkinson's disease may develop after a bout of encephalitis-sometimes as long as a year after the illness.