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Format Abstract

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Late effects of paralytic poliomyelitis in Olmsted County, Minnesota.

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We identified a cohort of 300 individuals who had paralytic polio between 1935 and 1955. All lived in Olmsted County, Minnesota. From the 247 survivors, we selected 50 subjects for detailed historical, functional, psychological, clinical, and electrophysiologic evaluation. Sixty-four percent of these 50 survivors complained of new symptoms of muscle pain, fatigue, and weakness after a period of prolonged stability. This led to changes in lifestyle or activity in only 18%. The likelihood of expressing new complaints was not related to present age or interval since polio, and electrophysiologic testing did not distinguish between those with or without new problems. The development of new difficulties in a limb was most strongly predicted by significant paralysis of that limb at the time of the acute illness. Patients with leg weakness were twice as likely to complain of new problems compared to those with arm weakness. Elevated creatine kinase levels were present only in those with new complaints.

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