



Educational achievements of children of parents with multiple sclerosis: A nationwide register-based cohort study.

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Abstract:

Little is known about the impact of parental multiple sclerosis (MS) on offspring's educational attainment. The objective of the study was to examine educational achievements in offspring of parents with MS compared with matched children of parents without MS in a nationwide register-based cohort study. Children of all Danish-born residents with onset between 1950 and 1986 were identified by linking the Danish Multiple Sclerosis Registry with the Civil Registration System. Twins, children with MS, and emigrated persons were excluded. The reference cohort consisted of randomly drawn individuals from the Civil Registration System without parental MS matched 8:1 to the MS offspring by sex and year of birth. Information about education was linked to the cohorts from nationwide educational registries. We included 4177 children of MS parents and 33,416 reference persons. Children of MS parents achieved statistically significant higher average grades than the reference cohort in their final exam of basic school with a mean grade difference of 0.46 (95 % CI 0.22-0.69; $p = 0.0002$). We found no difference in achievement of educational level above basic school (OR 1.04; 95 % CI 0.98-1.10; $p = 0.20$). There was a trend toward more MS offspring attaining health-related educations (OR 1.10; 95 % CI 1.00-1.21; $p = 0.06$). In conclusion, children of MS parents showed a small advantage in grade point average in final examinations in basic school, and they more often tended toward health-related educations. This study revealed no negative consequences of parental MS on grades and highest educational level achieved.

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