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| 7A-5 |
| **Pathology Question:** |
| What is the pathology of Parkinsons? |
| **Report:** |
| Parkinson’s disease is characterized by the gradual degradation of neurons in the brain, particularly the neurons in the brain that produce dopamine. Though there is no known definitive cause of Parkinson’s, there are many factors that are associated with the disease. Through research and genetic studies, many risk factors and contributing factors have been identified and attributed to cause Parkinson’s disease. Few rare genetic mutations have been discovered to cause Parkinson’s. Research has also found many genetic sequences that increase one’s risk for Parkinson’s. These sequences are usually found in patients with a family history of Parkinson’s. With an increased risk for Parkinson’s, certain environmental triggers have also been found to cause patients to acquire Parkinson’s later in their life. Like with many diseases, Parkinson’s can occur as a result of a so-called “perfect storm”. Meaning there was not one sole factor that caused the disease, rather it was the combination of many risk factors. Some risk factors include older age, family history, male gender, and even exposure to certain toxins such as herbicide and pesticides.       Dopamine plays a major role in some of the bodies motor and cognitive functions. As the levels of dopamine in the body are progressively decreasing, different symptoms begin to arise. Because of dopamine’s role in motor functions, symptoms such as tremors and a decrease in the function of some movements are present in patients with Parkinson’s. Some patients may experience some cognitive impairments as well. Some patients may present with a decline in motivation and mental acuity. Though there is variant levels of presentation of symptoms in different Parkinson’s patients, the progression of these symptoms helps determine the rate of progression of the disease. |
| **References:** |
| Parkinson's disease. (2020, August 07). Retrieved October 08, 2020, from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/parkinsons-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20376055>  Bhandari, S. (2019, June 19). Dopamine: What It Is & What It Does. Retrieved October 08, 2020, from https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/what-is-dopamine |