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Autoantibodies in Infection-Associated Cognitive Deficit: Pathogenic Mechanisms, Clinical Aspects, and Therapeutic Approaches

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Message from the Guest Editors

Autoantibody production in association with infection appears to bear pathogenic potential for cognitive impairment. Molecular mimicry, among other mechanisms, has been proposed to mediate such autoimmune phenomena. However, a detailed mechanistic account of autoantibody-mediated para-/post-infective neuronal and cognitive damage is still missing.

Moreover, if and how anti-neuronal antibodies can affect specific cognitive functions is largely unknown. Bridging the gap between the molecular immunology of infection-induced autoimmunity and cognitive neurology would result in better diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.

We intend to collect the most recent evidence on:

- Biological and molecular mechanisms originating autoantibodies targeting the brain during and after infections;
- Pathogenic effects exerted by anti-neuronal autoantibodies at the molecular level (not necessarily limited to post-infectious etiology);
- Neuropsychological patterns of cognitive deficits associated with specific microbes and/or autoantibodies;
- Neuroimaging and functional indexes of cognition in para-/post-infectious autoimmunity.

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