ARE MSA AND PD DISTINCT CLINICAL ENTITIES? (NO)

Gregor K. Wenning
Division of Neurobiology, Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery, Medical University Innsbruck, Austria

There is increasing recognition that the α-synucleinopathies Parkinson`s disease (PD) and multiple system atrophy (MSA) overlap at multiple levels. For example, recent advances in genetics have established variants in the *SNCA* gene, coding for α-synuclein, as risk factors for both MSA and PD, thereby supporting the notion that these two diseases are causally linked. Both disorders are characterized by the glial or neuronal deposition of abnormally phosphorylated, fibrillar α-synuclein within the central nervous system. In this presentation I review emerging evidence suggesting that MSA and PD represent similar phenotypes within the alpha-synucleinopathy spectrum. Recognizing the links between MSA and PD has fundamental implications for accelerated interventional drug discovery.