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**Multifactorial Assessment of Depleted Uranium Neurotoxicity**

Authors: [Bernard S. Jortner](#); [VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INST BLACKSBURG](#)

**Abstract:** THIS WAS A 5-YEAR PROJECT TO EXPERIMENTALLY ASSESS THE NEUROTOXICOLOGIC POTENTIAL OF EXPOSURE TO **DEPLETED URANIUM** (DU), AND THE ROLE OF STRESS IN ALTERING THE TOXICITY. THE PROJECT INVOLVED DETERMINATION OF THE TOXICOKINETICS OF DU IN THE BRAIN, DEVELOPMENT OF A RELEVANT STRESS MODEL, AND STUDY OF NEUROTOXIC EFFECTS OF A SINGLE (ACUTE) EXPOSURE TO SOLUBLE DU AND TO LONG-TERM EXPOSURE TO IMPLANTED PELLETTED DU, AND THEIR MODIFICATION BY STRESS. MAJOR FINDINGS IN THE ACUTE STUDY WERE DOSE-RELATED ELEVATED **URANIUM** IN BRAIN REGIONS, AND TRANSIENT DECREASE IN DOPAMINE IN THE STRIATUM ON POST-DOSING DAY 3 IN THE HIGH DOSE UNSTRESSED ANIMALS. THERE WERE DU-RELATED DECREASES IN MOTOR ACTIVITY, BODY WEIGHT GAIN AND FORELIMB GRIP STRENGTH. TRANSIENT UREMIA FROM DU DOSE-RELATED RENAL TUBULAR NECROSIS WAS ALSO SEEN, AND MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THESE CLINICAL FINDINGS. STRESS DID NOT ENHANCE THE DU TOXICITY. MAJOR FINDINGS FROM THE LONG-TERM DU-IMPLANTATION/STRESS STUDY WERE DU DOSE-RELATED INCREASED **URANIUM** CONCENTRATIONS IN SERUM, KIDNEY AND BRAIN REGIONS IN RATS SACRIFICED 6 MONTHS POST-EXPOSURE, UNAFFECTED BY STRESS. DECREASE IN DOPAMINE IN THE STRIATUM AND EPINEPHRINE IN THE CEREBELLUM WERE SEEN IN THE HIGH DOSE DU GROUP, ALSO UNMODIFIED BY STRESS. THESE STUDIES SHOW THAT **URANIUM** MOBLIZED FROM PERIPHERAL SITES CAN ENTER THE BRAIN AND HAVE ADVERSE NEUROLOGIC EFFECTS.

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