Awakenings

Encephalitis lethargica

Caused by a virus, started in 1916 and went on until 1927

Affected 5 million people! 1/3 died in acute phase, some had coma, some had sleeplessness.

Post-encephalitic Parkinsonism

Akinesia – without movement, inability to move muscles

Akathisia – restless and agitated movement, muscles of neck and face jerk over and over

There were also catatonic disorders of every kind.

Oculogyric Crisis

Eyes in deviated or fixed position, usually up and sideways, for minutes to hours. May be set off by emotional stress.

What was spared?

Higher faculties- intelligence, humor, imagination, judgement

Some patients recovered, some developed neurologic or psychiatric disorders, many developed Parkinsonism.

L-Dopa – precursor to Dopamine, given b/c Dopamine doesn’t cross the blood-brain barrier.

Neurons in substantia nigra of midbrain project to caudate and putamen and release dopamine. These neurons die off over time.