

Physician's Lexicon

Cerebral Hemispheric Structures

THOSE PRIVILEGED TO NAME THE MANY anatomic parts of the body were rarely authorities in the physiology of those structures. As a result, the anatomic nomenclature that we have inherited is quite utilitarian and less a reflection of their assigned biological function.

Consider the names of the four cerebral lobes. The frontal lobe, from the Latin, *frons*, meaning the front of anything, carries a no-nonsense name indicating nothing more complex than its relative position within the calvarium (from the Greek meaning skull and earlier from the Hebrew, *gulgoleth*, meaning skull, and later a skull-shaped hill.). The temporal lobe, from the Latin, *tempus*, meaning pertaining to time, but from an earlier Latin word signifying a place from which to observe, a consecrated place, a sanctuary (and from this variant meaning came English words such as temple and contemplate.) The parietal

lobe derives its name from the Latin, *paries*, meaning a wall, and earlier, something seized or fenced in. And the occipital lobe is named from the Latin, *occipitalis*, (toward the rear) and still earlier, from the Latin, *ob-* (a prefix meaning toward or against) and *caput* (meaning the head).

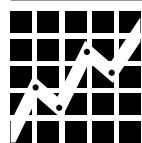
The names of the deeper supratentorial structures are quaintly descriptive, sometimes fancifully so. The hippocampal gyrus, for example, is from the Greek, *hippo-*, meaning horse (and hippopotamus therefore means a river horse—with *potamus*, a Greek word for river, and thus Mesopotamia is a nations between the rivers; and *eohippus*, a prehistoric horse, with *eo*, a Greek word meaning dawn) while campus means something curved (and hence, *campylobacter* means a curved bacterium.)

The thalamus bears a Greek name, meaning a pillow, a bedroom or a vault. The same root is found in the word, ophthalmic,

(hence study of the eye-chamber) with the Greek root, *oph-* meaning the eye.

And then there is the putamen, one of the basal ganglia, a word descended from the Latin, *putamen* meaning a shell, a pruning or botanical trimmings. (many English words use the same root including putative, amputate, compute and deputy.) The claustrum is from the Latin, *claustrum*, meaning a bolted place, a monastery, or sometimes a cloister; and thus claustrophobia is a morbid fear of being shut up. It is also related to the Latin, *claudere*, meaning to shut or enclose, and hence the English, claudication, to impair or shut off circulation to a limb. And the globus pallidus is a Latin phrase meaning a pale sphere. *Pallidus*, in Latin, means to extenuate, to make pale, to cloak (and hence, palliation is the therapeutic act of attenuating—of making pale—pain.)

— STANLEY M. ARONSON, MD



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
MICHAEL FINE, MD
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

VITAL STATISTICS

EDITED BY COLLEEN FONTANA, STATE REGISTRAR

Rhode Island Monthly Vital Statistics Report Provisional Occurrence Data from the Division of Vital Records

Underlying Cause of Death	Reporting Period			
	September 2011	12 Months Ending with September 2011		
	Number (a)	Number (a)	Rates (b)	YPLL (c)
Diseases of the Heart	182	2,449	232.5	3,725.0
Malignant Neoplasms	183	2,270	215.5	5,560.0
Cerebrovascular Diseases	33	440	41.8	737.0
Injuries (Accidents/Suicide/Homicide)	53	677	64.3	9,642.0
COPD	31	548	52.0	507.5

Vital Events	Reporting Period		
	March 2012	12 Months Ending with March 2012	
	Number	Number	Rates
Live Births	963	12,733	12.1*
Deaths	760	10,409	9.9*
Infant Deaths	(6)	(86)	6.8#
Neonatal Deaths	(5)	(66)	5.2#
Marriages	281	6,561	6.2*
Divorces	229	3,620	3.4*
Induced Terminations	344	4,369	343.1#
Spontaneous Fetal Deaths	67	698	54.8#
Under 20 weeks gestation	(56)	(591)	56.8#
20+ weeks gestation	(11)	(107)	8.4#

(a) Cause of death statistics were derived from the underlying cause of death reported by physicians on death certificates.

(b) Rates per 100,000 estimated population of 1,052,567. (www.census.gov)

(c) Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL).

Note: Totals represent vital events that occurred in Rhode Island for the reporting periods listed above. Monthly provisional totals should be analyzed with caution because the numbers may be small and subject to seasonal variation.

* Rates per 1,000 estimated population

Rates per 1,000 live births