BRIEF REPORTS

IDIOPATHIC THORACIC KYPHOSIS IN IDENTICAL TWINS

A. J. CARR

Case report. Twin boys presented at the age of 13.5 years complaining of thoracic back pain and a kyphotic deformity of six months duration. No other clinical abnormality was found. Lateral radiographs revealed vertebral wedging and irregularity of the vertebral end plates. The kyphosis angles measured 38° in twin one (Fig. 1) and 37° in twin two (Fig. 2).

no significant progression of the curve in either. Re-assessment one year after brace treatment had stopped was satisfactory (Fig. 4).

Discussion. The radiographic appearances of idiopathic kyphosis were first described by Scheuermann in 1920; the aetiology and pathogenesis however, remain unclear. A familial association has been noted by Sorenson (1964).

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Monozygosity was confirmed by the use of minisatellite gene probes (Fig. 3). The identical bands in the two vertical columns show that the boys have the same genetic make-up (Jeffreys, Wilson and Thein 1985). Both were treated with Milwaukee braces for 3.7 years with

This report of concordance in a pair of monozygous twins supports evidence for a genetic basis to the condition.

The case is reported with the permission of the late Mr G. R. Houghton. I would like to thank Donald Ogilvie for his help with the molecular genetic study. The minisatellite probes were kindly donated by A. J. Jeffreys.

No benefits in any form have been received or will be received from a commercial party related directly or indirectly to the subject of this article.

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