chain deficiencies (Schuelke et al. 1999, de Lonlay-Debeney et al. 2000). Conversely, respiratory chain deficiency could be regarded as a secondary event in AGS, as cytokines are known to down-regulate mitochondrial gene expression with a reduction in cellular ATP levels (Lou et al. 1994, Lewis et al. 1996) and to mediate organ inflammation leading to mitochondrial dysfunction (Kaneda et al. 2003). Moreover, IFN-α has been shown to depress mitochondrial respiration in vitro, by depleting mitochondrial transcription factor A (Inagaki et al. 1997). However, none of the genes involved in cytokine pathways has been identified at the 3p23 locus.

Whatever the mechanisms of the oxidative phosphorylation defect, this observation should prompt the investigation of oxidative phosphorylation in AGS and conversely the assessment of CSF IFN-α in respiratory chain deficiency. We suggest, therefore, that genetic disorders of the mitochondrial respiratory chain should be regarded as a possible cause or consequence of AGS.

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List of abbreviations

AGS	Aicardi-Goutières syndrome
ATP	Adenosine triphosphate
COX	Cytochrome c oxidase
CSF	Cerebrospinal fluid
GC	Gas chromatography
INF-α	Interferon alpha
SCCR	Succinate cytochrome reductase

Erratum

'Balancing certainty and uncertainty in clinical medicine'
Hayward
DMCN Vol **48:** 74–77

We would like to correct an error that was printed in the above mentioned article:

p 77: The sentence should have read: 'This article is based on Professor Hayward's inaugural lecture as Professor of Paediatric Neurosurgery, delivered at the Institute of Child Health…' and not 'This article is based on Professor Hayward's inaugural lecture as President of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at the Institute of Child Health…'

We sincerely apologize for this error.

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