

Walter A. Rocca

Walter A. Rocca, M.D., M.P.H. is a Professor of Epidemiology and Neurology at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine in Rochester, Minnesota. He previously worked for the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke in Bethesda, Maryland, and for several European institutions. Dr. Rocca's research focuses on the etiology of common neurodegenerative diseases such as parkinsonism and dementia. The fundamental idea is that diseases of the brain related to aging are heterogeneous at the population level and multifactorial at the individual level. These complex diseases are the result of complex gene-gene and gene-environment interactions acting in different phases of life (intrauterine, perinatal, early development, childhood, adolescence, adult life, and aging phases). Specific research interests include the identification of genetic and environmental risk factors for Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and vascular dementia. Dr. Rocca received his M.D. from the University of Padua, in Padua, Italy, his M.P.H. from the Johns Hopkins University, School of Hygiene and Public Health, in Baltimore, Maryland, and completed postdoctoral fellowships at the Johns Hopkins University and at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. Dr. Rocca served on several expert panels for the National Institutes of Health and for other institutions nationally (Institute of Medicine, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Department of Defense) and internationally (national research agencies of France, Italy, and Spain).