

A research team in Boston was able to clearly distinguish those with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) from both healthy and clinically depressed controls in a study performed earlier this year. The study, which utilized EEG spectral coherence data to identify brain variations in CFS patients, was performed by physicians from Harvard Medical School, Tufts Medical Center, Children's Hospital Boston and Brigham and Women's Hospital.

The ability to distinguish CFS from depression has long been a challenge in the medical community. There is no single diagnostic test available and the "standard battery of tests" does not detect the unique biomarkers involved in this complex illness. Although a variety of advanced testing methods can be used for diagnosis relating to biological dysfunction in CFS patients, most practitioners are unfamiliar with the research.

The EEG study included a total of 632 subjects and was conducted in an academic medical center electroencephalography laboratory. Comparisons were made between patients with carefully defined CFS, individuals with major depression, persons reporting general fatigue (but no other symptoms), and 390 healthy controls.

Following analysis of the information obtained, the research revealed that the technique had "identified unmedicated patients with CFS and healthy control subjects without misclassifying depressed patients as CFS..." The report further concluded that the research provides clear evidence that "CFS patients demonstrate brain physiology that is not observed in healthy normals or patients with major depression."

The Abstract and Full Text are available at <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2377/11/82/abstract>