

These articles show detection of spiroplasma ribosomal DNA in TSE brain tissues by polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Article #17 shows spiroplasma DNA in brains of patients with CJD. One of these cases was a patient with the thalamic form of the disease. Article #18 adds another dimension to these studies, wherein Southern blotting of the PCR products increases sensitivity and specificity of the test. Spiroplasma DNA was found consistently in all forms of TSE including CJD in humans, scrapie in sheep and chronic wasting disease (CWD) in deer. DNA sequence analysis of the PCR products confirmed the presence of spiroplasma DNA in the TSE brain samples and revealed a link between scrapie and chronic wasting disease.