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(NY) (NOT FOR PUBLICATION)
 KENNEDY HEALTH MON PMS EJT
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CHICAGO (AP) -- A KANSAS PATHOLOGIST WHO DID SOME DETECTIVE
 WORK IN ANALYZING PUBLISHED MEDICAL REPORTS ASSERTED MONDAY
 IT CAN BE "STRONGLY PRESUMED"

IT CAN BE "STRONGLY PRESUMED" THE LATE PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY
 SUFFERED FROM ADDISON'S DISEASE.

DR. JOHN NICHOLS SUGGESTED THAT A 1955 ARTICLE, CONCERNING
 SPINAL SURGERY PERFORMED ON AN UNNAMED ADDISON'S DISEASE SUFFERER,
 WAS ACTUALLY WRITTEN ABOUT AN OPERATION PERFORMED ON KENNEDY.

WRITING IN THE CURRENT JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL
 ASSOCIATION, NICHOLS SAID THERE WERE RUMORS, NEVER PUBLICLY
 CONFIRMED, THAT KENNEDY SUFFERED FROM THE DISEASE WHEN HE
 CAMPAIGNED FOR AND HELD THE PRESIDENCY. THE REPORT ON KENNEDY'S
 AUTOPSY DID NOT MENTION SUCH A FINDING.

IF KENNEDY DID HAVE THE DISEASE, SAID NICHOLS, OF THE UNIVERSITY
 OF KANSAS MEDICAL CENTER IN KANSAS CITY, THE INFORMATION SHOULD
 HAVE BEEN MADE KNOWN BECAUSE "THE PUBLIC IS ENTITLED TO
 KNOWLEDGE OF THE HEALTH OF THEIR CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CANDIDATE
 FOR THIS OFFICE."

ADDISON'S DISEASE AFFECTS THE ADRENAL GLANDS. BEFORE THE
 ADVENT OF CORTISONE AND OTHER STEROID DRUGS, IT USUALLY LED TO
 DEATH. UNTREATED VICTIMS DISPLAY EMOTIONAL INSTABILITY AND
 NERVOUSNESS. THEY OFTEN HAVE ANEMIA, DIGESTIVE DISTURBANCES
 AND MUSCLE WEAKNESS, AND ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO INFECTIONS.

NICHOLS SAID HE REACHED HIS CONCLUSION BY COMPARING NEWSPAPER
 REPORTS OF SURGERY PERFORMED ON KENNEDY IN 1954 WITH AN AMA
 MEDICAL JOURNAL REPORT OF SIMILAR SURGERY PERFORMED ON AN
 UNNAMED PATIENT OF THE SAME AGE AT THE SAME TIME AND IN THE SAME
 HOSPITAL.

HE GAVE THIS ACCOUNT:

THE ARCHIVES OF SURGERY, PUBLISHED BY THE AMA, CARRIED AN ARTICLE
 IN 1955 ABOUT SPINAL FUSION SURGERY PERFORMED ON A 37-YEAR-OLD
 UNIDENTIFIED MALE PATIENT WHO HAD BEEN SUFFERING FROM ADDISON'S
 DISEASE FOR SEVEN YEARS.

THE ARTICLE SAID THE SURGERY WAS PERFORMED AT THE CORNELL
 UNIVERSITY MEDICAL COLLEGE COMPLEX, NEW YORK CITY, ON OCT. 21, 1954.
 IT SAID THE PATIENT RETURNED FOUR MONTHS LATER FOR REMOVAL OF A
 METAL PLATE INSERTED DURING SURGERY.

A NEW YORK NEWSPAPER REPORTED ON SPINAL FUSION SURGERY
 PERFORMED IN THE SAME INSTITUTION ON THE SAME DAY ON KENNEDY,
 THEN A 37-YEAR-OLD U.S. SENATOR OF MASSACHUSETTS. IN A LATER
 STORY, THE NEWSPAPER SAID KENNEDY RETURNED TO THE HOSPITAL FOUR MONTHS
 LATER FOR REMOVAL OF A PLATE INSERTED DURING SURGERY.

THE NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS CITED WERE THOSE OF THE NEW YORK TIMES.

"IT IS MOST UNLIKELY THAT TWO PERSONS WITH THE SAME AGE AND CLINICAL
 HISTORY OF THE LATE PRESIDENT WOULD HAVE UNDERGONE SIMILAR SURGERY
 IN THE SAME HOSPITAL ON THE SAME DAY AND RETURNED ON EXACTLY THE
 SAME TIME FOUR MONTHS LATER FOR REMOVAL OF THE PLATE," NICHOLS SAID.

HE SAID THE AUTOPSY REPORT ON THE LATE PRESIDENT "IS CURIOUSLY
 SILENT ON THIS POINT AS WELL AS ON DETAILS OF THE PITUITARY, OF
 HIS VERTEBRAL COLUMN, AND SACROILIAC JOINTS."

"THE SILENCE ON THESE POINTS MAY BE DUE TO (A) ACCIDENTAL
 OR INTENTIONAL FAILURE TO SEARCH AND OBSERVE, OR (B) SUPPRESSION
 OF AUTOPSY FINDINGS AND EXISTING CLINICAL RECORDS BY RELATIVES OR
 FEDERAL OFFICIALS OR BOTH," HE SAID.

SA906PCD CW NM#