Teaching NeuroImages: Sonographic “retrobulbar spot sign” in differentiating etiologies of sudden visual loss

A 61-year-old vascular patient presented with headache and subacute blindness in the left eye. Remaining American College of Rheumatology criteria were negative. Sonography of the temporal artery revealed no halo sign, but due to low sensitivity, vasculitis could not be excluded.1 Transorbital examination revealed hyperechogenic retrobulbar spot sign (figure), which is highly specific for embolic occlusion of the central retinal artery.2 Comprehensive diagnostic workup revealed paroxysmal atrial fibrillation as a putative cause for the embolus and no evidence for vasculitis. Thus, potentially harmful thrombogenic administration of steroids could be avoided. Transorbital sonography may help in cases of sudden visual loss of unclear etiology.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS
Simon Faisser: drafting/revising the manuscript, analysis or interpretation of data, acquisition of data. Christine Grunwald: revising the manuscript, analysis or interpretation of data. Saskia H. Meves: revising the manuscript, analysis or interpretation of data. Ralf Gold: revising the manuscript, analysis or interpretation of data. Christos Krogias: drafting/revising the manuscript, analysis or interpretation of data, study concept or design, study supervision. All authors have read and approved the content of the manuscript.

STUDY FUNDING
No targeted funding reported.

DISCLOSURE
Dr. Faisser received travel grants for scientific meetings from Biogen Idec. Dr. Grunwald and Dr. Meves report no disclosures relevant to the manuscript. Dr. Gold serves on scientific advisory boards for Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd., Biogen Idec, Bayer Schering Pharma, and Novartis; has received speaker honoraria from Biogen Idec, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd., Bayer Schering Pharma, and Novartis; serves as editor for Therapeutic Advances in Neurological Diseases and on the editorial boards of Experimental Neurology and the Journal of Neuroimmunology; and receives research support from Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd., Biogen Idec, Bayer Schering Pharma, Merck Serono, and Novartis. Dr. Krogias received travel grants for scientific meetings.
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Teaching NeuroImages: Sonographic "retrobulbar spot sign" in differentiating etiologies of sudden visual loss
Simon Faissner, Christine Grunwald, Saskia H. Meves, et al.
Neurology 2014;82:e153-e154
DOI 10.1212/WNL.0000000000000365

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