Teaching NeuroImages: Severe vasospasm in traumatic brain injury

A 45-year-old man had a severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) with multicompartamental hemorrhages (figure 1). He was initially noted to be awake and following commands with his right side. Two weeks later, his examination deteriorated to coma with flaccid quadriplegia. Initial workup, including EEG, was unrevealing. MRI brain showed new multiterritorial infarcts (figure 1); a catheter-based angiogram confirmed severe vasospasm in several large vessels (figure 2).

Vasospasm following TBI has been previously described as underrecognized because it is often clinically silent, and typically occurring in the first several days when symptomatic. Late and extreme cases, as above, are rarely described.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Dr. Reznik: study design, analysis/interpretation of the data, drafting/revising the manuscript. Dr. Saeed: analysis/interpretation of the data. Dr. Shutter: study design, analysis/interpretation of the data.

STUDY FUNDING

No targeted funding reported.

DISCLOSURE

The authors report no disclosures relevant to the manuscript. Go to Neurology.org for full disclosures.

REFERENCES


From the Department of Neurology, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, PA.
Catheter-based angiogram shows severe vasospasm of the basilar (A), bilateral posterior cerebral (A), right internal carotid (B), and left internal carotid arteries (C).
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Neurology 2016;86:e132-e133
DOI 10.1212/WNL.0000000000002482

This information is current as of March 21, 2016

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0002482.DC1

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