Poster 11

Intracranial Arachnoid Cyst Causing Papilledema

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Introduction:
Papilledema is a term reserved for those patients who have optic disc edema caused by increased intracranial pressure. Arachnoid cysts are rare accounting for less than one percent of all intracranial lesions and are a very rare cause of papilledema. We present a patient with increased intracranial pressure from a cerebellar arachnoid cyst.

Methods:
A 43 year old Indian woman presented with a two month history of transient visual obscurations in both eyes. Her symptoms were worse with bending over, associated with headache and pulsatile tinnitus. She travelled to India frequently but did not report any history or symptoms of parasitic disease. Examination showed a slightly obese woman (5'4", 200 lbs), vision was 20/25 OU, color vision was 9/10 plates OU, confrontational fields were full, automated fields were mildly constricted OU. Ocular motility was normal. She had moderate papilledema in both eyes. The patient was prescribed acetazolamide 250 mg three times / day. Cranial and orbital MRI demonstrated a 4.5 by 4 centimeter right sided non-enhancing cerebellar cyst. There was mild displacement of the fourth ventricle. An empty sella and mild flattening of the posterior sclera indicated increased intracranial pressure. An ultrasound of the abdomen was normal. The patient was referred to neurosurgery and a right retromastoid craniectomy with resection of the cyst, intraoperative placement of a right parietal ventriculostomy and cranioplasty was performed.

Results:
Pathologic examination revealed the cyst to be a benign arachnoid cyst. After surgery the patient’s papilledema improved and the acetazolamide was tapered.

Conclusion:
There have been only five reported cases of posterior fossa arachnoid cysts in adults and only one was associated with papilledema and it was due to obstructing hydrocephalus. Papilledema is an unusual symptom of an arachnoid cyst and prompt surgical therapy is necessary to preserve vision.

References:

Key Words: Arachnoid Cyst, Papilledema, Posteroir Fossa, Cerebellum, Increased Intracranial Pressure

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