World Journal of Clinical Cases

World J Clin Cases 2021 January 6; 9(1): 1-290



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ABOUT COVER

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The WJCC is now indexed in Science Citation Index Expanded (also known as SciSearch®), Journal Citation Reports/Science Edition, PubMed, and PubMed Central. The 2020 Edition of Journal Citation Reports® cites the 2019 impact factor (IF) for WJCC as 1.013; IF without journal self cites: 0.991; Ranking: 120 among 165 journals in medicine, general and internal; and Quartile category: Q3.

RESPONSIBLE EDITORS FOR THIS ISSUE

Production Editor: Yan-Xia Xing Production Department Director: Yun-Xiaojian Wu; Editorial Office Director: Jin-Lei Wang.

NAME OF JOURNAL

World Journal of Clinical Cases

ISSN

ISSN 2307-8960 (online)

LAUNCH DATE

April 16, 2013

FREQUENCY

Thrice Monthly

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Dennis A Bloomfield, Sandro Vento, Bao-gan Peng

EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS

https://www.wjgnet.com/2307-8960/editorialboard.htm

PUBLICATION DATE

January 6, 2021

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INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/204

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PUBLICATION MISCONDUCT

https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/208

ARTICLE PROCESSING CHARGE

https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/242

STEPS FOR SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/239

ONLINE SUBMISSION

https://www.f6publishing.com

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World J Clin Cases 2021 January 6; 9(1): 274-277

DOI: 10.12998/wjcc.v9.i1.274 ISSN 2307-8960 (online)

CASE REPORT

Intraparenchymal hemorrhage after surgical decompression of an epencephalon arachnoid cyst: A case report

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Author contributions: Wang XJ designed the study and wrote the manuscript.

Supported by The Science and Technology Program of Nantong Health Committee, No. MA2019003 and No. KEY03.

Informed consent statement:

Written informed consent was obtained from the patient for publication of this case report and any accompanying images.

Conflict-of-interest statement: The authors declare that they have no competing interest.

CARE Checklist (2016) statement:

The authors have read the CARE Checklist (2016), and the manuscript was prepared and revised according to the CARE Checklist (2016).

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Abstract

BACKGROUND

This study reports the clinical presentation of intraparenchymal hemorrhage as a rare complication after surgical decompression of an intracranial epencephalon arachnoid cyst (IEAC) at the posterior cranial fossa.

CASE SUMMARY

The clinical information of a patient with an IEAC was reported, and the related literature was reviewed. A female patient with nausea presented to our hospital. Computed tomography demonstrated an IEAC located at the posterior cranial fossa, which was large and required surgical intervention. After operation, postoperative intraparenchymal hemorrhage was detected. She had a good recovery with conservative treatment 1 mo later.

CONCLUSION

Though postoperative intraparenchymal hemorrhage is rare after surgical decompression of an IEAC, more attention should be paid to such a complication.

Key Words: Intracranial arachnoid cyst; Surgical decompression; Hemorrhage; Complication; Case report

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Core Tip: Although intracranial epencephalon arachnoid cysts (IEACs) are rare, patients may become symptomatic due to cyst enlargement. In these patients, surgical intervention is required. I here report a case of intraparenchymal hemorrhage as a rare complication after the surgical decompression of an IEAC. This case indicated that patient's condition should be carefully reviewed after operation in case of fatal complications.

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Manuscript source: Unsolicited

manuscript

Specialty type: Medicine, research

and experimental

Country/Territory of origin: China

Peer-review report's scientific quality classification

Grade A (Excellent): 0 Grade B (Very good): 0 Grade C (Good): C Grade D (Fair): 0 Grade E (Poor): 0

Received: October 12, 2020 Peer-review started: October 12.

First decision: October 27, 2020 Revised: November 2, 2020 Accepted: November 13, 2020 Article in press: November 13, 2020 Published online: January 6, 2021

P-Reviewer: Strainiene S S-Editor: Chen XF L-Editor: MedE-Ma JY P-Editor: Wang LL



Citation: Wang XJ. Intraparenchymal hemorrhage after surgical decompression of an epencephalon arachnoid cyst: A case report. World J Clin Cases 2021; 9(1): 274-277

URL: https://www.wjgnet.com/2307-8960/full/v9/i1/274.htm

DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.12998/wjcc.v9.i1.274

INTRODUCTION

Intracranial epencephalon arachnoid cysts (IEACs) represent a relatively rare disease, accounting for less than 1% of all brain mass lesions[1]. IEACs are usually benign collections of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF), partly accompanied by a placeholder effect. Most patients with IEACs are asymptomatic and found incidentally. However, some of them may become symptomatic due to cyst enlargement. I here report a case of intraparenchymal hemorrhage as a rare complication after surgical decompression of an IEAC.

CASE PRESENTATION

Chief complaints

A previously healthy female (28 years old, right-handed) was admitted to our hospital with intractable nausea.

History of present illness

Medical treatment for nausea failed.

History of past illness

This patient had no history of past illness.

Personal and family history

This patient had no other previous medical history.

Physical examination

No neurological deficit or papilledema was observed in her neurological examination.

Laboratory examinations

Laboratory tests were in the normal range.

Imaging examinations

In her brain magnetic resonance imaging scan, a large fluid collection could be found at the posterior cranial fossa with a size of 6 cm × 7 cm (Figure 1A-C).

FINAL DIAGNOSIS

A large IEAC.

TREATMENT

Considering the mass effect and intractable nausea, the patient was admitted to the hospital for surgical decompression. During the operation, after occipital craniotomy, cerebellum dura was opened, and the wall of the cyst was resected and fully separated. Indirect surgical approaches with conservative procedures were used to gradually decompress this arachnoid cyst. Arachnoid cyst was opened and decompressed to the cisterna magna to avoid recurrence.

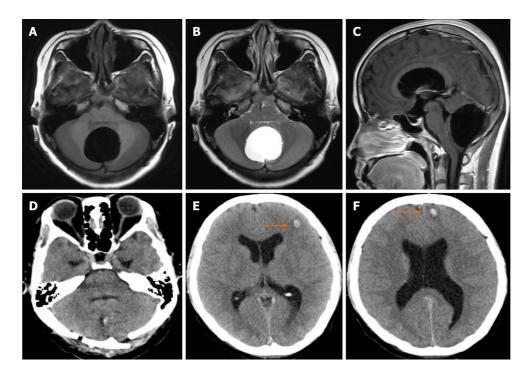


Figure 1 Imaging examinations. A-C: Axial T1-weighted (A), axial T2-weighted (B) and sagittal T1-weighted (C) magnetic resonance images of the head showing a well-defined lesion of cerebrospinal fluid in the subtentorial region; D: It prompts cysts is good decompression; E and F: Two foci of intraparenchymal hemorrhage were found in the frontal lobe.

OUTCOME AND FOLLOW-UP

From the postoperative routine review of computed tomography (CT), a good decompression was achieved (Figure 1D), while two focuses of intraparenchymal hemorrhage were found in the frontal lobe (Figure 1E and F). She had slight vomiting and headache. The neurological examination was normal. She achieved an excellent recovery 1 mo later with conservative treatment.

DISCUSSION

IEACs are collections of intro-arachnoidal CSF, which account for less than 1% of all non-traumatic brain mass lesions and are often asymptomatic^[1,2]. Nevertheless, the patients can be symptomatic due to cyst enlargement. Early diagnosis is critical as cysts cause the mass effect, which may require surgical intervention. The therapeutic schemes of IEACs remain controversial because of their variable manifestation patterns. Therapeutic options for larger cysts include CSF shunting, endoscopic fenestration, or craniotomy and open fenestration^[3].

IEACs are frequently found in the middle cranial fossa in 50% of cases, with a slight predilection for the left side and the male gender[1]. Symptoms include headache, behavioral problems, ataxia, cerebellar signs, nausea, vomiting, visual disturbance, and seizures. De et $al^{[4,5]}$ have reported that the most common symptom is a headache, followed by behavioral problems. For example, a change in personality and impaired mental function are the second most frequently reported symptoms and sometimes may be the only presenting features. Its origin remains unknown. The diagnosis is always apparent in CT. The most effective treatment for IEACs is surgical decompression of the cyst^[6,7]. In clinical practice, if there is a space-occupying lesion or apparent clinical symptoms, it is considered that there is an operative indicator.

There are several complications after the surgical decompression of arachnoid cysts, including recurrence, hydrocephalus, subdural hematomas, cerebral edema, infection, and seizures[3,8-10]. However, intraparenchymal hemorrhage in the brain parenchyma is a rare complication after the decompression of IEACs[11,12]. Few studies have reported the hemorrhage after surgical decompression of IEACs[11-13]. To the best of our knowledge, the first description of intraparenchymal hemorrhage after surgical decompression of IEACs was reported by Borges et al^[14] in 1995. They reported a case of brainstem hemorrhage after surgical removal of IEAC of the lateral fissure^[14]. Until

now, the pathogenesis of such complication remains largely unexplored, which may be attributed to reperfusion injury^[11]. It is well known that intracerebral hemorrhage may occur after rapid decompression of chronic subdural hematomas, and hypoperfusion of brain parenchyma after surgical decompression for cerebral tumor has also been reported[11,15,16]. It is believed that hemorrhage could be mainly attributed to the rapid decompression of the cyst, although the risk of rapid decompression was considered, and a gradual decompression of IEAC, in this case, was given to avoid rapid decompression and decrease the incidence of such rare complications.

CONCLUSION

Collectively, hemorrhage in a postoperative arachnoid cyst is a rare complication. However, it is critical to establish a timely and accurate diagnosis after a routine postoperative CT scan. Symptoms and signs are usually non-specific, and the diagnosis relies on a precise history, imageological examination, and careful observations.

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