Acute post-infectious cerebellitis
Cerebelite aguda pós-infecciosa

William Alves Martins¹, Rafael do Amaral Cristovam¹, André Palmini¹,²

A 19-year-old woman presented with a one-week history of headache, vomiting and ataxia. A few days earlier, she had an upper airway infection. Brain MRI showed diffuse swelling and hyperintensities of the cerebellar hemispheres (Figure). Laboratory studies did not reveal any etiological factor. She was started on mannitol and dexamethasone, completely improving over the next days.

Acute cerebellitis is characterized by diffuse or focal cerebellar swelling¹,², sometimes compressing or even occluding the fourth ventricle³. Treatment relies on corticosteroids⁴. As it may be confused with infiltrative tumors³, knowledge of this condition is important to avoid unnecessary procedures.

Figure. Brain magnetic resonance imaging at presentation. (A) Axial T2-weighted image shows increased signal intensity in both cerebellar hemispheres and compression of the 4th ventricle; (B) Coronal T2-weighted image showing cerebellar cortex hyperintensities; (C) Sagittal T1-weighted image demonstrating partial compression of 4th ventricle and brainstem; (D) Axial T2-weighted image shows enlargement of the lateral ventricles and subtle interstitial peri-ependymary edema (arrow).

References


¹Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Hospital São Lucas, Departamento de Neurologia, Porto Alegre RS, Brazil;
²Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Faculdade de Medicina, Departamento de Medicina Interna / Neurologia, Porto Alegre RS, Brazil.
Correspondence: William Alves Martins; Serviço de Neurologia, Hospital São Lucas da PUCRS; Avenida Ipiranga, 6690; 90610-000 Porto Alegre RS, Brasil; E-mail: walvesm.br@gmail.com

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