“Black turbinate sign”: a potential predictor of mucormycosis in cavernous sinus thrombophlebitis

“Sinal da concha preta”: um potencial preditor de mucormicose nas tromboflebites do seio cavernoso

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Rhinosinusitis has the potential to result in catastrophic intracranial extension in the presence of predisposing conditions, such as diabetes, immunosuppression (fungus) or the incomplete treatment of bacterial infection. It is assumed that cavernous sinus thrombophlebitis (CST) is secondary to retrograde extension due to a valveless system of the vein that communicates paranasal cavities to the cavernous sinus¹. The “black turbinate sign” results from dry gangrene in affected tissues, which presents in early stages paranasal mucormycosis. Conversely, bacterial sinusitis does not promote local necrosis and, therefore, it affects neither mucosal enhancement nor its T2 signal intensity².

A poor prognosis of CST highlights the relevance of correct diagnosis for early treatment. The “black turbinate sign” could represent a potential discriminating feature to distinguish mucormycosis in CST etiology (Figure).

References


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