

Intraventricular pilocytic astrocytoma: A case report

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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2024, 22(01), 298–301

Publication history: Received on 29 January 2024; revised on 21 March 2024; accepted on 23 March 2024

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.22.1.0786>

Abstract

Background: Pilocytic astrocytoma (PA) is a low-grade glioma that is common in children. Intraventricular location is extremely rare.

Case Description: We report a case of a young man, 19-year-old, that was admitted to our department for symptoms of increased intracranial pressure. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain revealed a large intraventricular mass within the left lateral ventricle which appears dilated and enlarged. The patient underwent right-sided frontal craniotomy for resection of the tumor. The resected mass was histologically diagnosed as pilocytic astrocytoma. Postoperatively, the patient had an uneventful evolution and was discharged without any neurological symptoms.

Conclusion: Although rare, PA should be considered as a differential diagnosis of large intraventricular tumors.

Keywords: Pilocytic Astrocytoma; Intraventricular Tumor; Ventricle; Intraventricular lesion; Hydrocephalus.

1. Introduction

Pilocytic astrocytomas (PA) are World Health Organization (WHO) Grade I astrocytic neoplasms that is common in the pediatric population with a peak incidence between 8 and 13 years of age [1,5,7,9,10]. These tumors are most frequently encountered in infratentorial structures, like cerebellum or optic pathway. Others locations of origin include midline structures of Cerebral Nervous System (CNS), such as thalamic/hypothalamic region [2,6,9]. Pilocytic astrocytoma that arise in the cerebral ventricle is rare.

In this report, we present a rare case of a 19-year-old man patient with a large intraventricular tumor which was later identified to be a Pilocytic astrocytoma.

2. Case report

2.1. History and clinical presentation

A 19-year-old male presented to the emergency department with one month of severe progressively worsening intermittent headache associated with vomiting and visual disturbances for 2 weeks. His past medical history was unremarkable. He denied any history of seizure, loss of consciousness. At the admission, he was alert and orientated, without cognitive disorders. There was no motor-sensory deficit. Ophthalmological examination showed a mild papilledema with blurring of vision.

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2.2. Diagnosis assessment

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain with and without contrast revealed a large intraventricular lesion measuring 7.6×7×6.3 cm, within the left lateral ventricle which appears dilated and enlarged. It was hypointense on T1-weighted, slightly hyperintense on T2-weighted sequences with mild heterogeneous enhancement after gadolinium injection (Figure 1,2).

2.3. Surgical Management

The patient underwent surgery with gross total resection of the lesion through the transfrontal approach. A large solid tumor was found and was removed with moderate bleeding. After tumor removal, a right frontal external ventricular drain (EVD) was placed.

2.4. Follow-up and outcome

His postoperative course was uneventful. He was discharged with close follow-up.

The histological examination of the excised tumor revealed multiple fragments of a neoplastic lesion of glial nature comprising cells of low-density showing Rosenthal fibers. Immunohistochemically, the tumor cells were largely positive for glial fibrillary acidic protein (GFAP). These characteristics were consistent with Pilocytic Astrocytoma, WHO grade I.

After 6 months of follow-up, neurological symptoms improved with good neurological status

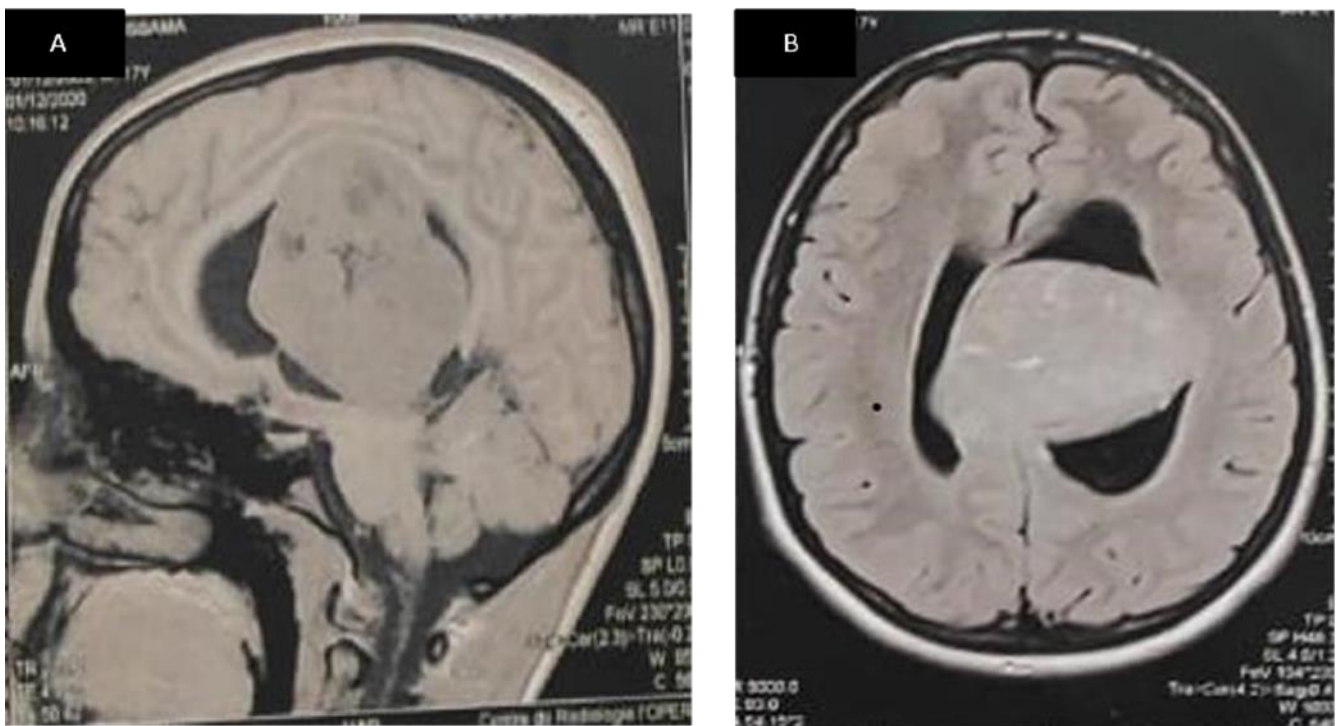


Figure 1 Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain: Sagittal T1W (A), Axial T1W (B) revealed a large intraventricular lesion within the left lateral ventricle

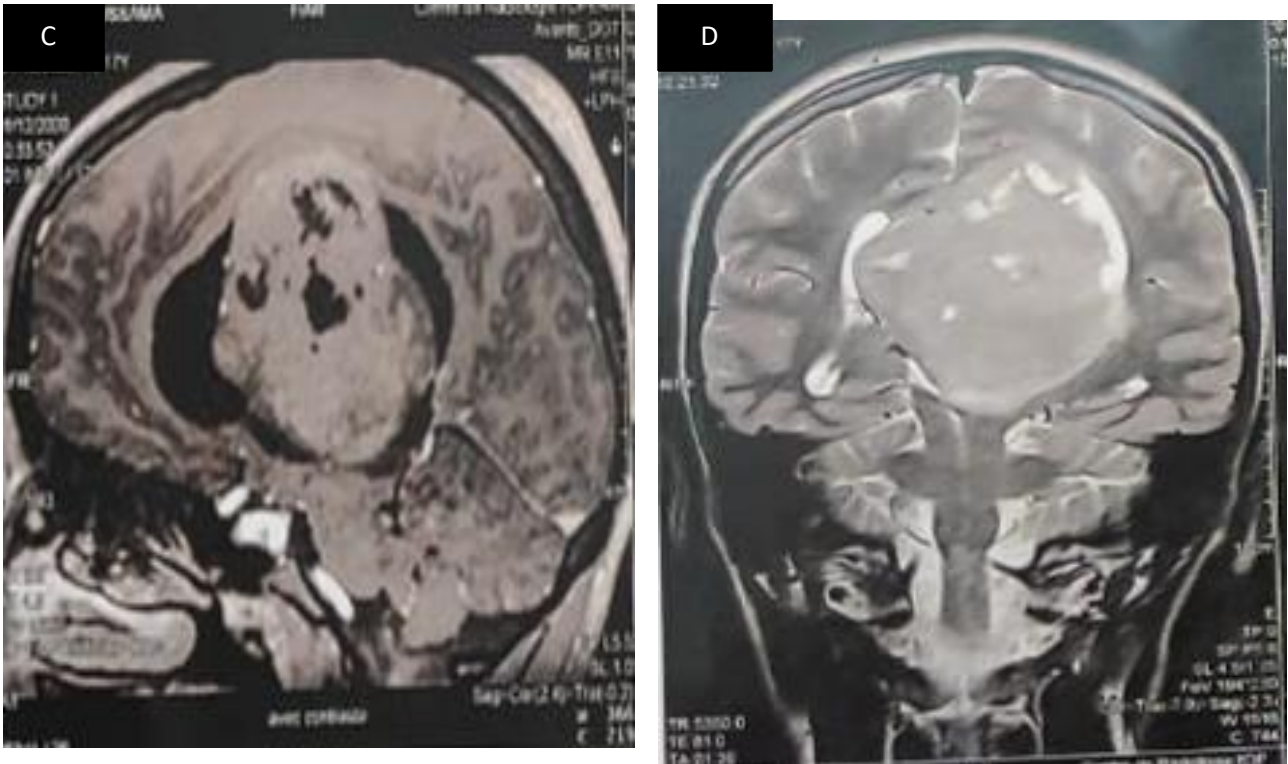


Figure 2 Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of the brain: Sagittal T1 post-contrast (C) and Coronal T2W (D) images showed a slightly hyperintense on T2-weighted sequences with mild heterogeneous enhancement after gadolinium injection.

3. Discussion

This is an unusual intraventricular location of PA. Neuroimaging demonstrated a large lesion within a left lateral cerebral ventricle which histologically showed to be classic PA.

This case further supports that PA can arise in the cerebral ventricular system and should be in the differential diagnosis of intraventricular tumors.

Intraventricular neoplasms originate from cells forming the ependymal lining or the subependymal plate of the ventricular wall, choroid plexus, and glial lined structures such as septum pellucidum [5].

PA in the ventricle is relatively rare, accounting for approximately 4–15.6% of all PAs. [10]. PAs are usually seen in children and adolescents younger than 20 years, and the incidence decreases with age [4,8,10].

Intraventricular tumors are relatively asymptomatic. The symptoms appear after the tumor size enlarges enough and blocks the CSF pathways, leading to hydrocephalus and increased intracranial pressure. [9,11]. These clinical symptoms include headache, vomiting, mental disorders, ataxia, among others [10].

Xia *et al.* analyzed in a series of 12 patients with Intraventricular Pilocytic Astrocytoma and concluded that radiological manifestations of intraventricular PA are similar to those of other PAs of the brain [10]. The MRI characteristics of these tumors are low signal in T1WI, high signal T2WI with heterogeneous enhancement on post-gadolinium images.

The best treatment option for these tumors is surgery. The choice of approach depends on various factors, including: localization of the tumor within the ventricle, the hemispheric dominance, the size of the tumors, their vascular supply and drainage, and the presence or absence of hydrocephalus [3].

4. Conclusion

Although rare, PA should be considered as a differential diagnosis of large intraventricular tumors.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study

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