Extensive disseminated cysticercosis

Ming-Pin Lin, Yen-Li Chen, Wen-Sheng Tzeng

DESCRIPTION

We present the case of a 74-year-old patient who, as an adult, enjoyed eating uncooked pork and beef. Recently, he had suffered from a sudden onset of gait disturbance, memory loss and disturbance of consciousness. He was brought to the emergency department for evaluation. On arrival, his vital signs were stable. The physical examination revealed mild weakness of the right extremities (muscle strength grade 3/5), slurred speech, left facial palsy and general appearance of weakness. ELISA was positive, as were serum and cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) parasite antibody immunoglobulin G for cysticercosis. We strongly suspected neurocysticercosis.

The brain CT scan (figure 1), brain MRI (figure 2), abdominal CT scan (figure 3) and plain X-rays (figures 4–9) had a characteristic ‘starry sky’
appearance, revealing calcified foci in muscles. Treatment of neurocysticercosis lesion includes administration of albendazole and steroids, and surgical ventriculoperitoneal shunting to alleviate the symptoms.

Disseminated cysticercosis is a very rare infectious disease. It is important to recognise disseminated cysticercosis clinically and to perform appropriate radiological investigations, because this condition requires an appropriate therapy. Patients who have not undergone treatment and who have active cysts remain at a risk of serious complications.
Learning points

▸ Disseminated cysticercosis is a rare form of cysticercosis in which the cysticerci spread throughout the body.
▸ It is important to recognise disseminated cysticercosis clinically and to perform appropriate radiological investigations, because this condition requires an appropriate therapy.

Contributors

M-PL wrote the article, W-ST collated data and Y-LC revised the manuscript.

Competing interests None.

Patient consent Obtained.

Provenance and peer review Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed.

REFERENCE


Figure 9  Leg film revealing numerous cysticerci on the left leg.