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A Rare Catastrophic Etiology for Ischemic Stroke: Iatrogenic Air Embolization

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CLINICAL IMAGE

A 77-year-old woman with peripheral arterial disease, deep vein thrombosis was transferred from an outside hospital for sudden unresponsiveness. The Patient was admitted after being found on the floor and surviving on water for days. The Patient had improvement in rhabdomyolysis and alertness eventually. The Patient suddenly became unresponsive after her arterial line care was flushed. CT Head without contrast showed multiple foci of intravascular gas scattered over cerebral hemispheres (Figure 1). The Patient required intubation, extubated after one week, and eventually discharged after four weeks to a long-term care facility. The patient had residual disorientation to time, left visual field cut, and left-sided weakness. Iatrogenic air embolization leading to cerebrovascular accident is a rare catastrophic condition and unique imaging findings. Immediate diagnosis, correct patient positioning (in right lateral decubitus with head down), and hyperbaric oxygen therapy can minimize brain injury [1,2].

Informed consent was obtained from the patient, and her healthcare power of attorney signed the consent form in the patient's presence.

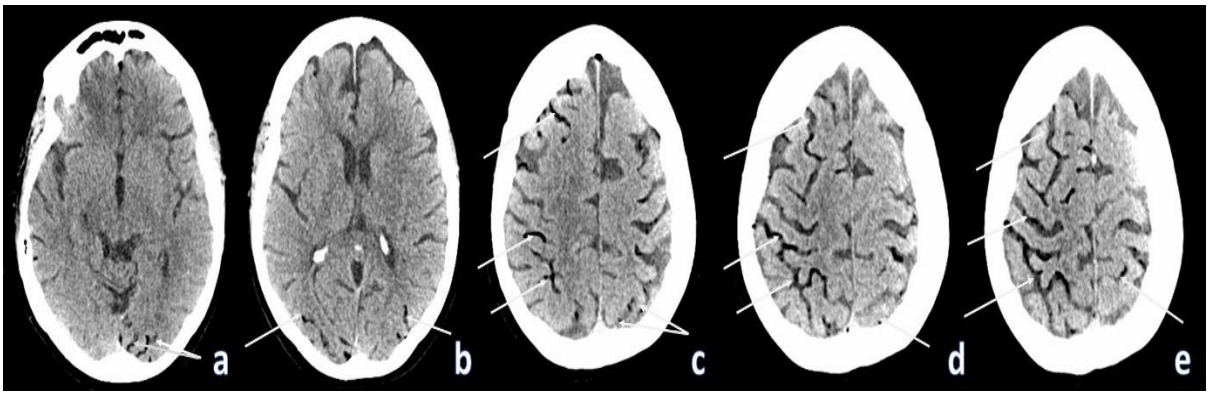

Figure 1: CT head without contrast (a, b, c, d and e) showed multiple foci of intravascular gas scattered over the right cerebral convexity superiorly.

Keywords: Iatrogenic air embolism; Cerebrovascular accident; Hyperbaric oxygen therapy

CONTRIBUTIONS

Jigar Mankad: Drafting/revision of the manuscript content, guiding literature review and writing process, including medical writing for contents.

No other author, coinvestigator, or contributor needed to be made aware of the manuscript submission.

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