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Venous Congestive Encephalopathy due to Central Vein Stenosis in a Hemodialysis Patient

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Venous congestive encephalopathy (VCE) can manifest as a rare complication of central vein stenosis in patients on hemodialysis. VCE can present with a variety of nonspecific neurological signs and symptoms that diagnosis may be often challenging. In this case we report a case of VCE due to central vein stenosis in a patient on hemodialysis. A 63-year-old woman on hemodialysis presented with a 2-week history of drowsy mental status. Brain MRI showed diffuse brain parenchymal swelling which was more severe in left hemisphere than right side (Fig 1). Left upper extremity fistulogram demonstrated 80% stenosis of the left brachiocephalic vein and reflux of brachial venous flow to left internal jugular vein. It was assumed that brachiocephalic vein occlusion induced rapid reflux flow into the brain resulting in intracranial venous congestion (Fig 2). Despite of balloon angioplasty on the stenotic site and subsequent ligation of left arm arteriovenous fistula, her neurologic status has not been improved until hospital Day 37. VCE can potentially be life-threatening when diagnosis delayed. As patients on hemodialysis are at a higher risk of central vein stenosis or occlusion, clinicians should recognize it promptly and consider early intervention therapy such as balloon angioplasty or surgical ligation of vascular access.

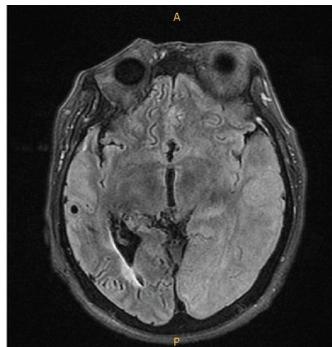


Figure 1



Figure 2