Armored brain

Figure CT scan

Bilateral, large, heavily calcified, chronic subdural hematomas distort the adjacent brain structures. A right frontal ventriculoperitoneal shunt is in place. The head circumference is 66 centimeters.

A 21-year-old woman with a history of cerebral palsy and neonatal hydrocephalus requiring perinatal shunting presented with a complaint of intermittent, nonpositional neck and head pain for 2 weeks. Her examination demonstrated a static spastic tetraparesis, megalencephaly, and no cognitive deficits. CT imaging of her head revealed massive, internally and externally calcified, chronic subdural hematomas (figure). This rare complication of childhood shunting for hydrocephalus is sometimes known as armored brain.¹ Attempts to resect these lesions can be complicated by large, acute subdural hematomas.² The patient's headaches resolved with a change of pillows, and she remains asymptomatic 3 months later.

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