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Giant cell arteritis causing multiple vertebro-basilar infarcts
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A 73-year-old woman was admitted with sudden onset of
 dysphagia and dysphonia. MRI showed multiple, acute
vertebro-basilar infarcts (figure, A). Four-vessel angiogra-
phy demonstrated distinct segmental narrowing of both
extracranial vertebral arteries (see the figure, B). Giant
cell arteritis was proven by temporal artery biopsy. Giant
cell arteritis is a rare cause of vertebro-basilar infarcts
and was suspected in this case because segmental narrow-
ing of the vertebral arteries was confined to the extracra-
nial segments. This can be explained by the fact that the
inflammatory process of giant cell arteritis is targeted
against the elastic fibers that undergo a gross diminution
or total loss as the vertebral arteries enter the skull.¹

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