Giant arteriovenous malformation presenting as pediatric task-specific dystonia

An 11-year-old girl presented with difficulties writing and playing the flute for 6 months. Her dystonic symptoms progressively involved her right shoulder and arm muscles, and by age 16 right hemidystonia was diagnosed (see video on the Neurology® Web site at www.neurology.org). Brain MRI revealed a Spetzler–Martin grade V (H11022) left deep hemispheric arteriovenous malformation (AVM). Angiography confirmed the finding (figure 1). Embolizations did not produce clinical benefit. Surgical radiotherapy and deep brain stimulation were contraindicated. Oral medications failed to control symptoms and botulinum toxin type A injections improved dystonia but were associated with limb weakness. Although rare, AVMs should be considered in the differential diagnosis of pediatric task-specific dystonia (figure 2).

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