Teaching NeuroImage: Cerebral T-waves from an aneurysmal cardunculus compression

Susanne Muehlschlegel, MD
Richard P. Goddeau, Jr., DO
John R. Sims, Jr., MD

Address correspondence and reprint requests to Dr. John R. Sims, Massachusetts General Hospital, Departments of Neurology and Radiology, Division of Neurocritical Care and Stroke, CNY149 Room 6403, 13th Street, Charlestown, MA 02129 jsims@partners.org

Preoperative ECG shows diffuse T-wave inversions (QTc 459 msec) (A). Noncontrast head CT shows a right peri-insular hyperdensity (B, arrow). CTA shows one right middle cerebral artery aneurysm compressing the insula (arrow) and two other aneurysms (arrowheads) (C). Postoperative ECG shows reversal of T-waves in precordial leads (QTc 408 msec) (D).
A 41-year-old woman developed temporary substernal chest pain. Physical examination was normal. ECG showed diffuse T-wave inversions with nonfamilial/non-medication-related QTc prolongation (figure, A) persisting despite the resolution of chest pain after sublingual nitroglycerin. Normal serum/urine toxicology, cardiac enzymes, transthoracic echocardiogram, and resting Technetium-99m sestamibi study raised the suspicion for cerebral T-waves. Head CT/CT-angiogram (CTA) revealed a middle cerebral artery aneurysm compressing the cardunculus,1 in the right anterior inferior insula (figure, B and C). Partial ECG normalization (figure, D) by cardunculus decompression (1 month after aneurysm clipping) supports that it is the regulator of sympathetic cardiac outflow balance.1,2

REFERENCES
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