Superficial siderosis of the CNS associated with multiple cerebral cavernous malformation

A 19-year-old man presented with a sudden onset of headache and vomiting for 3 days. Neurologic examination was unremarkable but revealed a slightly stiff neck. MRI showed multiple cerebral cavernous malformations in the brain. T2-weighted and susceptibility-weighted images exhibited linear hypointensity around the brain surface, indicating a deposition of hemosiderin consistent with superficial siderosis (figure).

Superficial siderosis of the CNS is a rare condition caused by hemosiderin deposition in the subpial layer of the brain and spinal cord. Such a deposition is due to repeated chronic subarachnoid hemorrhage. Cavernous malformations were less frequently reported as a cause of superficial siderosis.

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