Teaching Video NeuroImages: Gelastic cataplexy as the first neurologic manifestation of Niemann-Pick disease type C

José Luiz Pedroso, MD, PhD
Eduardo Ferracioli Fusão, MD
Carol Ladeia-Frota, MD
Juliana Harumi Arita, MD
Orlando G. Barsottini, MD, PhD
Marcelo Rodrigues Masruha, MD, PhD
Luiz Celso Pereira Vilanova, MD, PhD

A 10-year-old boy presented to our hospital with a 3-year history of fall attacks triggered by laughing, leading to a generalized loss of muscle tone without loss of consciousness (video). One year later, motor delayed skills started. Examination showed ataxia, moderate cognitive impairment, and vertical gaze palsy. EEG revealed diffuse slowing and disorganization of background rhythms. Molecular analysis disclosed heterozygosis p.P1007A and p.A1035V mutations, diagnostic of Niemann-Pick disease type C (NPC).

NPC is a lysosomal storage disorder caused by intracellular accumulation of cholesterol and glycosphingolipids. Neurologic manifestations include ataxia, dementia, seizures, and supranuclear vertical gaze palsy. Gelastic cataplexy is rarely described as the first neurologic symptom. Children with very frequent cataplexy should be tested early for NPC.

REFERENCES
Teaching Video NeuroImages: Gelastic cataplexy as the first neurologic manifestation of Niemann-Pick disease type C
José Luiz Pedroso, Eduardo Ferracioli Fusão, Carol Ladeia-Frota, et al.
Neurology 2012;79:e189
DOI 10.1212/WNL.0b013e31827597bf

This information is current as of November 26, 2012

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