

A Rare Cause of Facial Edema and Pain: Temporalis Muscle Hypertrophy

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Abstract

Temporalis Muscle Hypertrophy (TMH) is a rare entity of masticatory muscle hypertrophy. It is a disease of important differential diagnosis between peripheral nervous system dysfunctions and neuromuscular diseases. TMH is most commonly bilateral and usually associated with other types of masticatory muscles hypertrophy, such as masseter or pterygoid hypertrophy. However, isolated unilateral TMH is extremely rare. After collecting data from the electronic medical record and allowing the patient permission to report the anamnesis, we describe the clinical case of an unusual form of pain and facial edema. In this case report, we present an adult patient with unilateral temporalis muscle hypertrophy.

Keywords: Inflammatory cells; Focal myositis; Neuromuscular diseases; Unilateral temporalis muscle hypertrophy

Introduction

Temporalis muscle hypertrophy (TMH) is a rare entity of masticatory muscle hypertrophy. TMH is most commonly bilateral and usually associated with other types of masticatory muscles hypertrophy^[1]. However, isolated unilateral TMH is extremely rare^[2]. In this case report, we present an adult patient with a rare cause of facial edema: unilateral temporalis muscle hypertrophy.

Material and Methods

The data were collected from the patient and from an electronic medical record with the patient's permission. The patient signed the term clarification and agreement with medical research. The authors guarantee all ethical principles of research. Data access, data retention, confidentiality of patient's personal information, image integrity and clinical trial transparency have been preserved.

Case Report

A 57-year-old man was referred to the emergency medical service due to recurrent edema in the right temporal and periorbital region. The pain increased with increasing edema. There were no alleviation factors for the symptoms. The condition was associated with pain of mild intensity, without headache characteristics. The patient reports that the episodes occurred at large intervals, usually once every two months. And it took about 10 to 15 days to decrease the edema.

An important characteristic was the visual and psycho-

logical impact involved, since the people who saw him were scared with such edema in the facial region. The patient had already been treated for suspicion of allergic conditions and giant cell arteritis, excluding such diagnoses. He consulted several rheumatologists and neurologists before hospital admission, and did not succeed in diagnosis.

On evaluation in the neurology service, the patient presented unilateral edema on the right side. On physical examination, the patient reported pain of moderate intensity at the level of the ophthalmic and maxillary branches of the right trigeminal nerve. There was no visual impairment, autonomic signs, dysfunction in other cranial pairs or other associated symptoms. The patient followed up with investigation in the radiology department of the hospital, where the MRI examination was performed as shown in figure 1.

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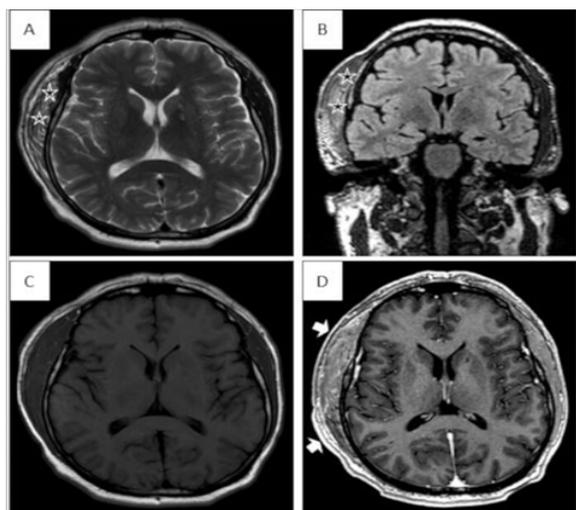


Figure 1: Axial (A) T2-weighted, (B) coronal T2/FLAIR-weighted MRI and (C) T1-weighted native followed (D) T1-weighted contrast-enhanced MRI show expansion and massive high signal intensity (black stars) seen on (A) and (B), as well as significant contrast enhancement (white arrows) involving the muscular compartment of the temporalis muscle on (D) compared with (C).

The image shows the signal change with hyperintensity on T2 sequence in the temporalis muscle region on the right side. The suggested clinical condition was temporal muscle myositis.

The patient performed biopsy of the right temporal muscle, confirming the diagnosis of focal TMH according to figure 2.

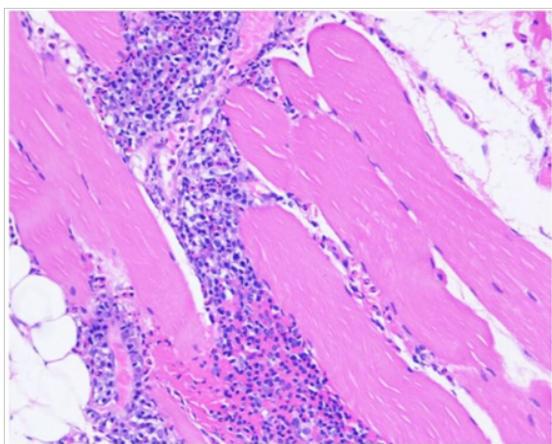


Figure 2: Hematoxylin and Eosin staining shows interstitial mononuclear and polymorphonuclear inflammatory infiltrates.

After the diagnosis, the patient started treatment with oral corticosteroids and showed a significant clinical improvement with reduction of pain and edema on the right side.

Discussion

Isolated unilateral TMH is an example of focal myositis^[3]. This disease is an inflammatory muscle disorder of usually unknown etiology. The diagnosis can only be established by exclusion of local infection, malignant tumors of the muscle, and connective tissue disease. The inflammatory cells represented mainly

macrophages and CD8-positive cells. By electron microscopy, there is only minimal pathology of interstitial capillaries and no unequivocal evidence of undulating tubuloreticular profiles as often seen in dermatomyositis^[4].

Isolated unilateral TMH is a rarely reported clinical entity. Consideration of a broad differential diagnosis combined with a detailed histological and radiologic work-up will help the physician diagnose the underlying pathology^[5].

This disease is peculiar because there is no identifiable etiology, age category or side predominance^[6]. The potential etiological factors include local factors, such as bruxism, dental malocclusion, bony prominences leading to trauma and reactive hypertrophy ascribed to psychogenic factors. When the patient presents isolated temporalis hypertrophy, different etiologies should be considered, such as idiopathic inflammatory myopathy, rhabdomyosarcoma and infiltrative leukaemias and lymphomas^[7].

Biopsy of the temporalis muscle is suggested as a tool for definitive diagnosis. It is performed after a full blood count and erythrocyte sedimentation rate blood tests, as well as computerized tomography (CT) or MRI for exclusion of any underlying pathology. While radiation-free MRI is a more useful imaging tool than the relatively inexpensive CT, ultrasonography is an important option. Ultrasonography is cheaper, radiation free and demonstrates the homogeneity and relative size of soft tissues^[5-8].

There are different treatment modalities available for this disease. Some patients have not undergone any active intervention and were treated symptomatically^[5,6]. Further treatment options include amitriptyline hydrochloride, corticosteroids, or the placement of a maxillary stent^[8]. Botulinum toxin^[9] may present an effective but less invasive alternative to surgical procedures in cases not controllable by analgesic medication^[10].

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