

VIDEO Volitional opsoclonus

Patricio S. Espinosa, MD, MPH; and Joseph R. Berger, MD, Lexington, KY

Opsoclonus (saccadomania) is defined as random, uncalled-for, large-amplitude, back-to-back saccades without intersaccadic intervals. An abnormality of the omnipause neurons in the brain stem nucleus raphe interpositus has been suggested, but not proven, as the etiology of opsoclonus.¹ Opsoclonus occurs with paraneoplastic, infectious, postinfectious, toxic, or metabolic disorders; however, it is often idiopathic. Intentional fixation instability may result in ocular movements closely resembling opsoclonus.² We describe a patient with the volitional ability to replicate “opsoclonus.”

This 55-year-old man presented with transient left-sided numbness which, after thorough evaluation, was attributed to a transient ischemic episode. His neurologic examination, including

ocular motility, was perfectly normal. However, he was voluntarily able to display wildly chaotic eye movements (video clip). He commented that he has been aware of this ability since childhood. No other family members, to the best of his knowledge, are able to replicate these eye movements. Analysis of the eye movements permitted by looping and pausing the video segment reveals that the actual eye movements are either diagonal (horizontal and vertical in phase) or, in some cases, elliptical (horizontal and vertical 90° out of phase), indicating that it is “voluntary opsoclonus,” also referred to as “voluntary multiplanar flutter” (Louis Dell’Osso, Cleveland, OH, personal communication, January 4, 2005).

The identification of volitional eye movements in clinical practice is important because it permits the distinction between neurologic and factitious disorders.

Copyright © 2005 by AAN Enterprises, Inc.

Disclosure: The authors report no conflicts of interest.

Address correspondence and reprint requests to Dr. Patricio S. Espinosa, Department of Neurology, Kentucky Clinic (Room L-445), Lexington, Kentucky 40536-0284; e-mail: pspespi2@email.uky.edu

1. Ridley A, Kennard C, Scholtz CL, Buttner-Ennever JA, Summers B, Turnbull A. Omnipause neurons in two cases of opsoclonus associated with oat cell carcinoma of the lung. *Brain* 1987;110(Pt 6):1699–1709.
2. Yee RD, Spiegel PH, Yamada T, Abel LA, Suzuki DA, Zee DS. Voluntary saccadic oscillations, resembling ocular flutter and opsoclonus. *J Neuroophthalmol* 1994;14:95–101.

Neurology[®]

Volitional opsoclonus

Patricio S. Espinosa and Joseph R. Berger

Neurology 2005;65;E11

DOI 10.1212/01.wnl.0000180351.66206.a6

This information is current as of September 12, 2005

| | |
|---|---|
| Updated Information & Services | including high resolution figures, can be found at: http://n.neurology.org/content/65/5/E11.full |
| Supplementary Material | Supplementary material can be found at: http://n.neurology.org/content/suppl/2005/09/11/65.5.E11.DC1 |
| References | This article cites 2 articles, 0 of which you can access for free at: http://n.neurology.org/content/65/5/E11.full#ref-list-1 |
| Permissions & Licensing | Information about reproducing this article in parts (figures, tables) or in its entirety can be found online at: http://www.neurology.org/about/about_the_journal#permissions |
| Reprints | Information about ordering reprints can be found online: http://n.neurology.org/subscribers/advertise |

Neurology® is the official journal of the American Academy of Neurology. Published continuously since 1951, it is now a weekly with 48 issues per year. Copyright . All rights reserved. Print ISSN: 0028-3878. Online ISSN: 1526-632X.

