

VIDEO

Unilateral asterixis after thalamic hemorrhage

Kevin J. Klos, MD; and Eelco F.M. Wijdicks, MD

A 48-year-old woman with uncontrolled hypertension had abrupt onset of headache. On examination she was drowsy and showed right-sided upper limb asterixis (video). CT scan of the head showed hemorrhage centered in the anterior thalamus on the left (figure). Adams and Foley introduced the term asterixis¹ (Greek, *a-sterixis*, and best translated as “no steadiness”). Bilateral asterixis, which is asynchronous and often asymmetrical, occurs in acute renal, hepatic, and pulmonary disease and in other systemic conditions. Unilateral asterixis points to an acute structural lesion, usually in the thalamus. It may be the only easily identifiable clinical sign.²

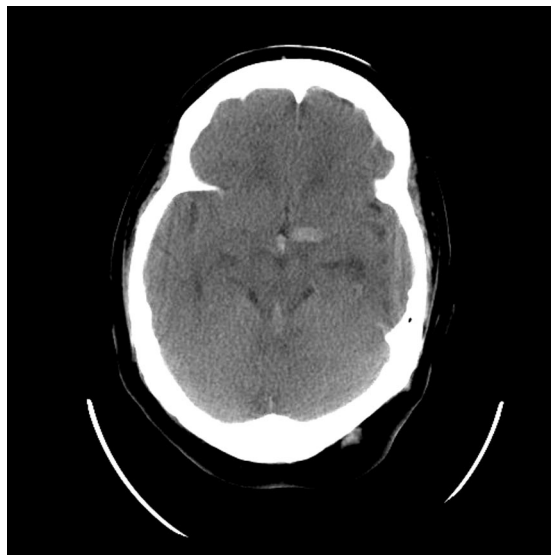


Figure. CT without contrast shows an acute hemorrhage in the left anterior thalamus with intraventricular extension.

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2. Kim JS. Asterixis after unilateral stroke: lesion location of 30 patients. *Neurology* 2001; 56:533–536.

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