

Teaching NeuroImages: Extrapontine osmotic demyelination in hypernatremia

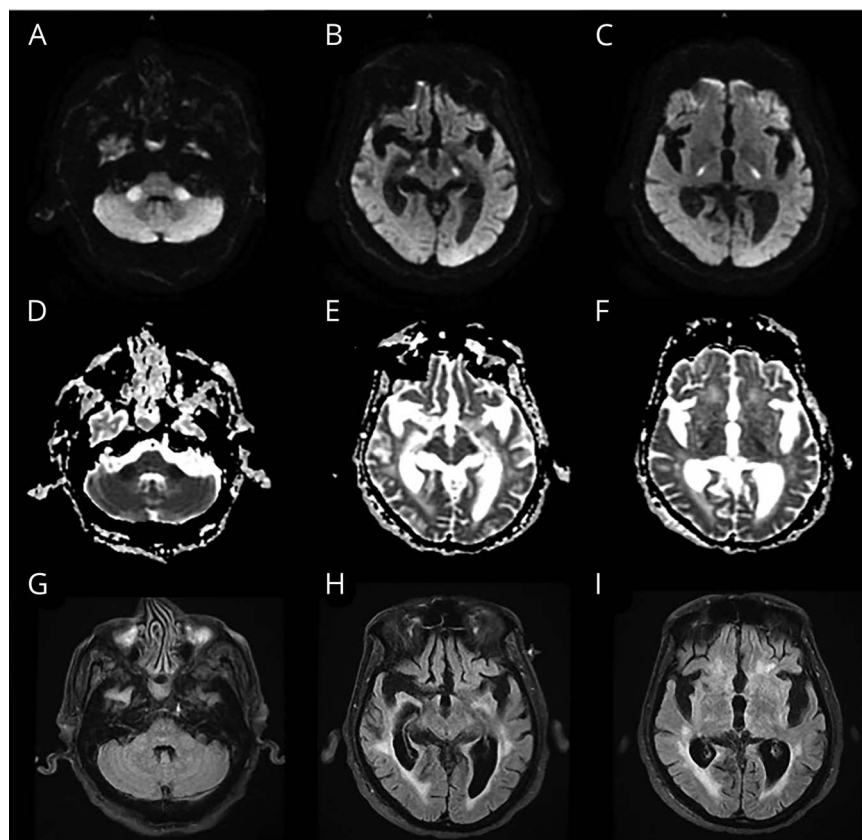
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Figure Diffusion-weighted imaging (DWI), apparent diffusion coefficient (ADC), and fluid-attenuated inversion recovery (FLAIR)



Axial diffusion-weighted MRI brain shows bilateral symmetrical hyperintensities in (A) middle cerebral peduncles and (B, C) along the cortical spinal tracts. (D–F) ADC sequence shows areas of hypodensity correlating with hyperintensity in DWI sequence. (G–I) Subtle changes noticed in FLAIR sequence due to the early stage of demyelination process.

An 82-year-old man presented with altered mental status, withdrawal to pain, osmolality 405 mOsm/kg, and sodium >180 mEq/L, corrected at 8 mEq/L/d. Brain MRI on day 4 showed restricted diffusion within bilateral middle cerebellar peduncles and along the cortical spinal tracts (figure). Extrapontine osmotic demyelination was diagnosed. Classically described after rapid correction of hyponatremia, few cases have been reported in patients with severe hypernatremia. Extrapontine osmotic demyelination occurs after rapid increase in extracellular sodium causing cellular dehydration and cell death of astrocytes or oligodendrocytes provoking non-inflammatory demyelinating lesions in pontine or extrapontine regions. Isolated extrapontine lesions are seen in two-fifths of patients.^{1,2}

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Go to Neurology.org/N for full disclosures. Funding information and disclosures deemed relevant by the authors, if any, are provided at the end of the article.

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Appendix Authors

Name	Location	Contribution
Pablo Paz, MD	Texas Tech University Health Science Center, Lubbock	Literature review, paper writing

Appendix *(continued)*

Name	Location	Contribution
Jie Pan, MD, PhD	Texas Tech University Health Science Center, Lubbock	Literature review, image processing
Somedeb Ball, MD	Texas Tech University Health Science Center, Lubbock	Literature review

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