GELASTIC SEIZURES RELATED TO HYPOTHALAMIC HAMARTOMA.  
CASE REPORT

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Summary

Introduction. Hypothalamic hamartoma is a non-neoplastic malformation and may be associated with gelastic seizures and other epileptic seizures, behavioral disorders and precocious puberty. It is now believed that the epileptogenic process initiates in the neuron cells of the malformation itself.

Objective. This article presents a case of successful treatment of gelastic seizures related to hypothalamic hamartoma in an adult patient.

Discussion. The patient was a 25-year old man with intractable epilepsy in the form of gelastic seizures with onset in the 4th year of life, intellectual impairment and nonrelated behaviour disorders. MRI revealed a hypothalamic malformation, 2 cm in diameter, in the floor of the third ventricle and the mamillary bodies and involving the third ventricle (typ IIb according to Valdueza et al.). Access to the tumor was achieved by means of the transcallosal interforniceal. Early postoperative MRI showed complete removal of the tumor. Histological and immunohistochemical tests confirmed the diagnosis of hypothalamic hamartoma. No postoperative complications were observed. In the early postoperative period amnestic syndrome was observed with a strong tendency to gradual dissolution. In a 2.5-year follow-up no gelastic seizures or any other seizures were present. There was significant improvement in behaviour and memory functions.

Conclusion. Intractable gelastic seizures and other associated seizures with hypothalamic hamartoma can be successfully treated surgically. Complete or nearly complete hamartoma removal can lead to cessation of seizures and behavioural improvement.

Key words: Hypothalamic hamartoma – Drug resistant epilepsy – Gelastic seizures