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Cerebral Angiitis

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Synonyms

[Cerebral vasculitis](#)

Definition

Cerebral angiitis or cerebral vasculitis is a relatively rare disease, characterized by inflammation of the blood vessels inside and leading to the brain. It may be caused either by a primary disease of the blood vessel walls producing inflammation or as a secondary phenomenon resulting from a systemic inflammatory disease such as systemic lupus erythematosus or certain infections.

Current Knowledge

Angiitis that is confined to the brain is relatively uncommon, and is called primary angiitis of the central nervous system (PACNS), isolated CNS vasculitis, primary CNS vasculitis, or granulomatous angiitis of the nervous system. It usually affects small- and medium-sized cerebral blood

vessels, but does not involve blood vessels outside of the CNS. Headache and encephalopathy are the most frequent symptoms. Stroke occurs in about 20% of patients. Blood tests reflecting inflammation are usually normal, but magnetic resonance imaging of the brain is abnormal in more than 90% of patients. However, the pattern of abnormal findings is not specific. Cerebrospinal fluid analysis usually reveals elevations in total protein level or white blood cell count. Angiography has a low sensitivity and low specificity. Treatment usually includes cyclophosphamide and prednisone.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Lupus Cerebritis](#)
- ▶ [Moyamoya Disease](#)
- ▶ [Vasculitis](#)
- ▶ [Vasospasm](#)

References and Readings

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