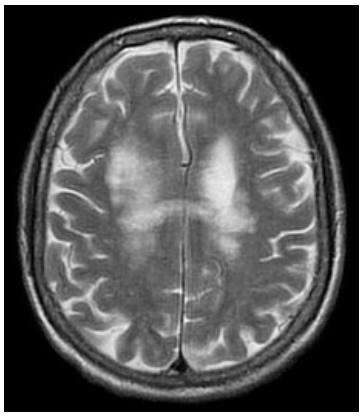
Progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy

It is a rare viral infection caused by **demyelination** of nerves. The condition is a failure of cellular immunity. It is a **fatal** complication of diseases such as lymphoma, leukemia, SLE, HIV infection and sarcoidosis.

Etiology

Progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML) is caused by reactivation of saprophytic papovavir.



MRI showing progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy

Clinical picture

Papovirus attacks oligodendroglia and causes demyelination of nerves. This process takes place without any signs of inflammation. Important clinical symptoms include:

- personality change,
- cortical blindness,
- seizures,
- progressive dementia,
- hemiparesis.

Patients may have extensive diffuse hemispheric involvement and death occurs without remission in 3-6 months.

Diagnosis

Progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy is in most cases diagnosed at an advanced stage. Brain biopsy, CT and MRI. In these examinations, we observe multi-focal changes in white matter. In the cerebrospinal fluid we find an increase in gamma globulins.

Therapy

There is no therapy for this disease yet, with half of the patients dying within a few months of diagnosis. [1]

Links

Related articles

- Viral infections of the nervous system

References

1. SEIDL, Zdeněk – OBENBERGER, Jiří. *Neurologie pro studium i praxi.* 1. edition. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2004. ISBN 80-247-0623-7.

Portal: Neurology Portal: Microbiology Portal: Infectious medicine