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It is not depression: A case report of a 37-year-old firefighter with frontotemporal dementia

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Abstract

A 37-year-old married, right-handed active firefighter presented to the primary care clinic with a self-report of difficulties in memorising and recalling information associated with declining work performance. Collaborative history-taking revealed that he also experienced emotional and social withdrawal, apathy, irritability and distractibility. He was initially diagnosed with major depressive disorder but showed no improvement with an antidepressant. This young man with no history of hereditary neurodegenerative disorder had further deterioration in cognitive function, predominantly executive behaviours, with progressive aphasia. Brain magnetic resonance imaging revealed cerebral atrophy predominant over the frontotemporal lobe. Positron emission tomography showed fluorodeoxyglucose hypometabolism at the bifrontal and left parietal and temporal cortices, consistent with frontotemporal dementia. He required institutionalisation with full nursing care less than 24 months after the onset of the symptoms. This case highlights the need for diagnostic consideration of dementia in young individuals presenting with cognitive impairment among other symptoms. It also emphasises the importance of obtaining collateral information from close relatives to avoid misdiagnosis and addresses the psychosocial impact of dementia at a young age. © 2023, Academy of Family Physicians of Malaysia. All rights reserved.

Author Keywords

Cognitive symptoms; Dementia; Frontotemporal dementia; Magnetic resonance imaging; Major depressive disorder

Index Keywords

antidepressant agent, cyanocobalamin, electrolyte, fluorodeoxyglucose, folic acid, rivastigmine, sertraline, simvastatin, valproic acid; adult, alcohol consumption, apathy, aphasia, Article, blood cell count, brain atrophy, case report, cerebrospinal fluid analysis, clinical article, cognition, cognitive defect, computer assisted tomography, degenerative disease, dementia, depression, disorientation, drug substitution, dyslipidemia, electroencephalography, frontotemporal dementia, glucose blood level, human, kidney function, lipid fingerprinting, liver function, major depression, male, neuroimaging, neuropsychological assessment, nuclear magnetic resonance imaging, positron emission tomography, problem behavior, single photon emission computed tomography, social support, thyroid function

Chemicals/CAS

cyanocobalamin, 53570-76-6, 68-19-9, 8064-09-3; fluorodeoxyglucose, 29702-43-0; folic acid, 59-30-3, 6484-89-5; rivastigmine, 129101-54-8, 123441-03-2; sertraline, 79617-96-2, 79559-97-0; simvastatin, 79902-63-9; valproic acid, 1069-66-5, 99-66-1

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