

E-Pearl of the Week

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Fatal gastroenteritis

Cerebellar stroke may present with nausea, vomiting, and truncal ataxia without weakness or limb ataxia, and progress within hours to coma and respiratory arrest due to brainstem compression (what C. Miller Fisher has called “fatal gastroenteritis”). For this reason, no patient with nausea and vomiting should be allowed to leave the emergency room unless they can walk steadily. This should also be considered when consulting on non-ambulatory, medically ill in patients with sudden nausea and vomiting who cannot be moved from their bed.

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For more information, contact:

Kathy Pieper
Deputy Managing Editor, *Neurology*®
349 W. Commercial Street, Suite 2250
East Rochester, NY 14445
tel. (585) 248-2070
fax (651) 332-8603