

E-Pearl of the Week

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Keraunoparalysis

Keraunoparalysis is a phenomenon that was described by Charcot in which a lightning strike causes a temporary paralysis of the limbs. The pathophysiology of this transient paralysis is not well understood, but peripheral nerve injury due to electrical current or vasoconstriction has been proposed. Other immediate neurologic complications of lightning strikes can include hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy due to cardiac arrest, intracranial hemorrhage, cerebral infarction, cerebellar syndromes, seizures, and myelopathy. Motor neuron disease has been reported as a possible delayed sequela of lightning strike. Neuropsychological and cognitive disorders with lightning strikes can resemble those of traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Reference

Cherington M. Neurologic manifestations of lightning strikes. *Neurology* 2003;60:182-185. Click here to access this article online.