

E-Pearl of the Week

Brought to you by the Resident and Fellow Section of the Journal *Neurology*®.

July 22, 2009

Thoracic outlet syndrome and retrograde cerebral embolism

Thoracic outlet syndrome causing distal subclavian artery compression and thrombosis is a rare cause of artery-to-artery embolic stroke. Propagation of thrombus to the origin of the vertebral artery may lead to embolism. Alternatively, retrograde blood flow has been described in the subclavian artery, making it a possible source of retrograde embolism. The majority of case reports of this phenomenon report *right*-sided thoracic outlet syndrome. In the July Resident and Fellow section, Gooneratne et al report a 21-year-old man with thoracic outlet syndrome due to a cervical rib who develops a pontine infarction. Access the article.

References

Gooneratne IK, Gamage R, Gunarathne KS. Pearls & Oysters: Distal subclavian artery: A source of cerebral embolism. *Neurology* 2009;73:e11-e12.