

E-Pearl of the Week

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Isolated medial rectus palsy in midbrain infarction

Isolated medial rectus palsy may be seen as a sign of midbrain infarction. Impaired adduction of the ipsilateral eye may accompany bilateral ptosis and normal pupil function. The oculomotor nuclear complex consists of one unpaired central caudal nucleus for the bilateral levator palpebrae superioris muscles and four paired subnuclei. The most ventrally situated subnuclei are for the medial rectus muscles and may be preferentially affected in basilar artery thrombosis. Medial rectus palsy due to nuclear infarction must be differentiated from a lesion of medial longitudinal fasciculus causing internuclear ophthalmoplegia with contralateral abduction nystagmus and normal convergence.

Reference:

Rabadi MH, Beltmann MA. Midbrain infarction presenting isolated medial rectus nuclear palsy. *Am J Med* 2005;118:836-837.

Disclosure: *Dr. Aarti Sarwal has no disclosures.*