

Upside Down Words as Initial Clinical Presentation of an Underlying Acute Ischemic Stroke

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Abstract : Background: Reversal of vision metamorphopsia is a transient form of metamorphopsia described as an upside-down alteration of the visual field in the coronal plane. Patients would describe objects, such as cups, upside down, but the tea would not spill, and people would walk on their heads. It is extremely rare as a stable finding, lasting days or weeks. We report a case wherein this type of metamorphopsia occurred only in written words and lasted for six months. Objective: To the best of our knowledge, we report the first rare occurrence of reversal of vision metamorphopsia described as inverted words as the sole initial presentation of an underlying stroke. Case Presentation: We report a 59-year-old male with poorly controlled hypertension and diabetes mellitus who presented with a 3-day history of difficulty reading, described as the words were turned upside down as if the words were inverted horizontally then with the progression of deficits such as right homonymous hemianopia and achromatopsia, prosopagnosia. Cranial magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) revealed an acute infarct on the left posterior cerebral artery territory. Follow-up after six months revealed improvement of the visual field cut but with the persistence of the higher cortical function deficits. Conclusion: We report the first rare occurrence of metamorphopsia described as purely inverted words as the sole initial presentation of an underlying stroke. The differential diagnoses of a patient presenting with text reversal metamorphopsia should include stroke in the occipitotemporal areas. It further expands the landscape of metamorphopsias due to its exclusivity to written words and prolonged duration. Knowing these clinical features will help identify the lesion locus and improve subsequent stroke care, especially in time-bound management like intravenous thrombolysis.

Keywords : rare presentation, text reversal metamorphopsia, ischemic stroke, stroke

Conference Title : ICCN 2024 : International Conference on Clinical Neurology

Conference Location : Tokyo, Japan

Conference Dates : May 23-24, 2024