HYDRANENCEPHALY IN A PRIMIGRAVIDA

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ABSTRACT

A case of hydranencephaly in a primigravid woman seen in our centre by ultrasonography is presented considering its rarity.

Key words : Hydranencephaly, Ultrasonography, Congenital anomaly.

INTRODUCTION

Hydranencephaly is the complete or nearly complete destruction of the cerebral cortex and basal ganglia.[1] Usually, the thalami and lower brain centers are preserved although the thalami may also be involved in the destructive process. The choroid plexus may also be preserved, thus although the head is often small, with functioning choroid plexus, hydrocephalus may ensue. In hydranencephaly, the telencephalon is replaced by fluid-filled cavities covered only by leptomeninges. The abnormalities seen sonographically in hydranencephaly are so striking that detection is not a problem.

CASE REPORT

A woman of age 25 yrs., came to CNMU, Rangpur for antenatal ultrasound. She was a primigravida with a history of 25 wks. of amenorrhea. Sonographic findings were polyhydramnios, large fluid-filled fetal cranium, cerebral mantle was deficient, brain stem, basal ganglia and thalami were visualized, but falx was not intact (fig.1), however, fetal heart movement was present and regular. Other fetal parts were normal apparently. The patient was admitted under Prof.Dr. Ferdousi Sultana in Rangpur Medical College Hospital. The patient was counseled about the poor prognosis of the baby and she agreed to terminate the pregnancy.

Fig.1 Ultrasonography of fetal head showing deficient cerebral mantle and fluid-filled fetal cranium.

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DISCUSSION

In hydranencephaly, cerebrum is entirely replaced by cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). Prognosis is poor, most of the babies die within first year.[2] Multiple causes are described, occlusion of internal carotid arteries or intracranial cerebral artery[3] of developing cerebrai hemispheres and infection. Skull and meninges are normal. Cerebellum and midbrain are intact.

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