62 y/o woman with sudden intense headache followed by bouts of vomiting.

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Internal Carotid Artery Dissection
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- Separation of arterial wall layers resulting in a false lumen
- Hemorrhage may be due to an intimal tear or other pathology of the vasa vasorum
- Spontaneous dissection of cervical arteries occur in about 3 cases per 100,000 individuals across all ages
- Patients with spontaneous cervical artery dissections due to connective tissue or vascular disorders is low
- Most common association is with Fibromuscular dysplasia
- Most often presents with ischemic stroke or TIA
Internal Carotid Artery Dissection

Associated Disorders:
• Fibromuscular dysplasia (FMD)
• Ehlers Danlos Syndrome
• Marfan Syndrome
• Osteogenesis imperfecta
• Cystic medial necrosis
• Alpha 1 antitrypsin deficiency
Internal Carotid Artery Dissection

-Symptoms include: head/neck pain, headache of gradual onset (although some have sudden and severe pain “thunderclap” headache, tinnitus, scalp tenderness.

-Horner syndrome occurs in 25% of cases – distention of sympathetic fibers spanning the external surface of the ICA (usually ptosis and miosis)

-Diagnosis made my neuroimaging showing long tapered arterial stenosis, a tapered occlusion, a dissecting aneurysm, an intimal flap, a double lumen, or an intramural hematoma.

-Most common imaging performed: Brain MRI with MRA or CTA

-Fat-Sat T1 MRI of the neck and intracranial course of ICA best for subacute dissection due to Methemoglobin in vessel wall
References

Spontaneous Dissection of the Carotid and Vertebral Arteries | NEJM

Carotid and vertebral artery dissection syndromes | Postgraduate Medical Journal
pmj.bmj.com › Archive › Volume 81, Issue 956