Reviewer’s report

Title: Severe and isolated headache associated with severe hypertension as unique symptom of posterior cerebral edema syndrome

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Reviewer: Ming J Lim

Reviewer’s report:

In this case report, Milani and co-authors describe a patient with what they termed a “posterior cerebral edema syndrome”. Whilst this case is systematically presented and reasonable written, I have two major reservations (major compulsory revisions) about the formulation of the manuscript.

1. Firstly, calling this as a “posterior cerebral edema syndrome”. Hinchey et al had described this syndrome as a posterior reversible leukoencephalopathy syndrome, reflecting the predominant white matter involvement (Ref 1 manuscript), with a subsequent report proposing the posterior cerebral edema syndrome (ref 2). This condition is now frequently referred to as the posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome (PRES), in recognition of the grey matter involvement (see Bartynski et al. AJNR Am J Neuroradiol 2006;27:2179–90 for example). Whilst cerebral oedema may occur as a result of this condition, particularly in the sicker patients, this is not invariable and certainly unlikely to be the case in this patient. Furthermore, the imaging of the patient does not support this. As such, the formulation of this being a posterior cerebral edema syndrome is dated, and clinically inaccurate.

2. Secondly, headache is one of the commonest symptoms reported in patients with PRES. Whether this is related to the full blown syndrome involving seizures is irrelevant as I would struggle to find a clinician who would not consider this as a differential diagnosis with the history of severe headache and arterial hypertension in a child with a renal co-morbidity. The authors could perhaps reformulate the primary message to be that the early recognition prevented a progression to the full blown syndrome, rather than the novelty of the isolated headaches and arterial hypertension.

Finally, the 4 figures could be merged so the before and after visual impact could be emphasised. The abnormal changes could be further highlights by some arrows (minor essential).

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests