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Autoimmune Encephalitis as a Cause of Status Epilepticus

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Autoimmune encephalitis is the most common cause of new-onset refractory status epilepticus. About half of the patients with new-onset refractory status epilepticus have autoimmune antibodies causing autoimmune encephalitis. Although the remaining half is categorized as cryptogenic, many of them might have autoimmune mechanism with no detectable antibody. Immunotherapy is mandatory to control anti-epileptics-refractory status epilepticus caused by autoimmune encephalitis. However, the early detection and treatment of autoimmune encephalitis is always challenging during neurointensive care for the patients. Careful history taking and clinical decision based on the mode of onset and supportive laboratory data are important. For the patients with recurrent seizures after the improvement from status epilepticus, it is also difficult to decide whether to use further immunotherapy or not. This lecture summarizes the clinical presentations and therapeutic considerations for the autoimmune encephalitis presented with refractory status epilepticus.

Key Words: Autoimmune encephalitis, Immunotherapy, Status epilepticus

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