



Vascular Dementia

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INTRODUCTION

Vascular dementia (VaD) does not have a clear diagnostic criterion, except that it is inherent in many different subtypes(1). VaD represents clinically cognitive impairment directly related to vascular damage to the brain with various potential contributing factors (2). Although modern criteria allow for multi-site therapeutic studies, the definition of dementia was mostly based on Alzheimer's disease (AD). Therefore, the symptoms of cognitive impairment mostly included memory loss. However, advanced neuroimaging tools, such as computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) show that the hallmarks of VaD in the brain were very prevalent. Sub-clinical infarcts and white matter lesions by MRI were seen in, respectively 17 % and up to 90 % of individuals (3,4). The clinical presentation of VaD can be caused by localized larger vascular injury and cumulative cerebral small vessel disease (SVD).

EPIDEMIOLOGY

The new definitions without memory impairment instead of the standard definition of VaD and the usage of vascular cognitive impairment as a new term affect the prevalence and incidence rates. The prevalence of VaD is increasing globally because of aging of the population, and it is estimated to affect 7.6% of individuals aged 60 years or older worldwide(5). The incidence and prevalence of VaD vary according to geographic location, age, sex, and comorbidities, in-

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A study of nimodipine in subcortical VaD found that there are some advancements in memory (38). According to a review, cerebrolysin had positively effect on cognition and global outcome in VaD, but that wider usage of it was not recommended because of some limitations of the study (39).

CONCLUSION

There is still uncertainty about definition and treatment of VaD. The clinical diagnostic criteria has been improved for clinical trials, but further studies are needed. Studies such as biomarker, PET imaging, tau and amyloid-related CSF markers in AD also offer opportunities for mixed type of dementias. These studies are important to differentiate neurodegenerative and vascular pathologies and verification the diagnosis of VaD. VaD and its mechanisms are needed much further studies compared to AD. One thing which is learned from the studies is that memantine and cholinesterase inhibitors are not appropriate for VaD treatment. The cornerstones of the management of VaD are that focusing on management comorbidities, vascular risk factors, recognition of non-cognitive symptoms, and provide the support for patients and carers.

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