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Hyperglycemia induced hemichorea-hemiballismus in a 71-year old female presenting with involuntary unilateral movements: a case report

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Hemichorea-hemiballismus is a rare presentation of nonketotic hyperglycemia, usually involving elderly females. A 71-year old female, with poorly controlled diabetes, presented with a one-month history of involuntary unilateral movement beginning with the left arm spreading to the ipsilateral lower extremity. Computed tomography (CT) imaging of the brain revealed non-specific hyperdensity in the right basal ganglia. Further work-up with the use of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) was done showing abnormal signals in the right basal ganglia. In this case, we note the significance of detecting rare findings in diabetic patients through different imaging modalities such as CT and MRI, as differentiated from other more common pathologies causing neurologic symptoms. Prompt diagnosis would alert the clinician to the cause of the movement disorder. Correcting the hyperglycemia reverses this condition.

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