



Beauty Parlour Stroke Syndrome

*Ann Benzily

Assistant Professor, Sree Gokulam Nursing College, Venjaramoodu, Trivandrum, India

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*Corresponding author: [Ann Benzily](#)

Assistant Professor, Sree Gokulam Nursing College, Venjaramoodu, Trivandrum, India

Abstract

Beauty Parlour Stroke Syndrome often belongs to a category which is often ignored, misdiagnosed, particularly with women with underlying neurological conditions worsen when the head is positioned the way it is in a regular hair salon. It is also known as Vertebrobasilar insufficiency. It is a rare phenomenon caused by either cerebral artery dissection or vertebral artery compression due to neck positioning and manipulation at the hair salon sink bowl.

Keywords: Beauty Parlour Stroke Syndrome, Vertebrobasilar insufficiency, Cerebral artery dissection.

Introduction

Beauty Parlour Stroke Syndrome was coined in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 1993 by Dr Michael Weintraub after he saw five older women who had developed serious neurological symptoms following shampoos at hair salons. Complaints included severe dizziness, loss of balance, and facial numbness. Four out of five suffered strokes, The Guardian reported in an article published in 2016. It is also referred to as the Salon Sink Syndrome and Salon Wash-basin Syndrome. The syndrome was first reported by Michael Weintraub of New York Medical college in 1992-93. As with most diseases in India that go ignored and misdiagnosed, particularly with women, certain underlying neurological conditions worsen when the head is positioned the way it is in a regular hair salon. Any stroke occurs when the blood supply to the brain is blocked by anything at all. This blockage results in a stroke whose effects range from slight discomfort to near-permanent disability, depending on how severe it is. In this case, the beauty parlour stroke syndrome is also known as Vertebrobasilar insufficiency.

Definition

"Beauty parlour stroke syndrome", otherwise known as a hairdresser-related ischemic cerebrovascular event (HICE) or vertebral-basilar ischemia (VBI), is a rare phenomenon caused by either cerebral artery dissection or vertebral artery compression due to neck positioning and manipulation at the hair salon sink bowl.

Risk factors

- Previous partial obstruction to the artery due to atherosclerosis
- Longer duration of the extended position of the neck
- Presence of smaller vertebral arteries
- Smoking
- Diabetes or high blood pressure
- Middle to Older age
- Arthritis of the spinal column of the neck

Etiopathophysiology

In 10-20 per cent people, one side of the artery may be thin which can lead to stroke when the other (thick-side's artery) is kinked or gets compressed with any kind of hyperextension of the neck Stroke affecting vertebrobasilar artery territory

can occur during “shampoo hair-wash in a beauty parlour, especially in women with other atherosclerotic risk factors and undetected vertebral hypoplasia. Prompt recognition and treatment can prevent disability”. It happens when one tends to twist the neck and head hard with a jerk, and there is a cracking sound, “Such a jerk movement can lead the tender vessels to get injured, and blood supply to the brain getting hampered — resulting in a stroke. This is called as vertebral artery dissection. Experts say that conditions like atherosclerotic — thickening or hardening of the arteries caused by a build-up of plaque in the inner lining of an artery are to be blamed. This plaque around the artery can be developed by various factors such as poor exercise, heavy consumption of fatty food, and more.

When the head is inclined a certain way on the washbasin, the artery, which is already stressed and functioning on a subpar level because of all the plaque-buildup, can't take it anymore and it manifests into dizziness, nausea and even vomiting simply because the brain is not getting enough blood.

Apart from hair wash, other factors that can trigger this beauty parlour stroke syndrome are neck massage or putting cold water suddenly over the head and neck area.

As with most neurological conditions, the symptoms dictate the treatment. Apart from frequent body checkups, a healthy diet, and exercises, avoiding excessive strain on one's neck is also important because one never know what underlying condition they may have.

Symptoms

- Dizziness
- Nausea and Vomiting
- Problems with vision like blurred vision and double vision
- Loss of balance
- Vertigo
- Numbness in the face
- Weakness of a limb/limbs resulting in drop attacks
- Slurring of speech
- Pain in the neck

Diagnostic evaluation

- A neurological examination shows neurological deficits depending on the part of brain affected.
- Tests That may help to diagnose beauty parlor stroke syndrome include:
- Imaging tests like CT scan and MRI to check for changes in the brain
- Magnetic resonance angiography, to check for blood flow to the brain
- Cardiac tests like ECG and echocardiogram to rule out a cardiac cause of Stroke

Treatment

Anti-platelet drugs and blood thinners are recommended for people with stroke. While some recover well post stroke, others owing to co-morbidities and age may need to be on medication throughout life.

Precautions

- Saloon staff should exercise caution when washing hair of customers or giving them massages, especially the elderly.
- Customers should request gentle massages rather than vigorous ones to avoid putting too much pressure on the blood vessels, which might result in a stroke.

Prevention

- While in parlors and salons, make sure that the head should not be twisted hard.
- If the client is feeling dizzy while hair washing with hyperextension of the neck, then ask the client to lie down immediately. The person should be immediately taken to the doctor without any delay.
- It is pertinent to avoid hyper extending the neck backwards during hair wash. “If neck has to be extended, then it should be lesser than 20 degrees”.
- Don't incline the neck too deep inside the washbasin
- Ask the salon assistant to either help to keep some support under the neck or simply use a waterproof or covered chair headrest.

- More importantly, experts suggest that the customers should insist to always put lukewarm water over their head or neck; it's never a good idea to shock the central nervous system by usage of cold water which could be an aggravating factor for stroke.

Rehabilitation

- **Exercise:** When it comes to preventing practically any disease, exercising is a no-brainer. It keeps the heart and body nourished and promotes general wellness. Any type of exercise— gym, yoga, or pranayama — can help increase metabolism and guarantee that our pancreas is functioning properly.
- **Ditch white sugar and make the switch to natural sugars:** White sugar, which majority of us consume every day, is largely empty calories. Making it a part of our diet will do us absolutely no good. Therefore, switching to natural sugar forms like fruits, jaggery, or honey is strongly advised.
- Increasing our intake of foods like asparagus, artichokes, avocado, broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower that have low glycemic loads and low glycemic indexes is also a good idea.
- **Early dinners and a sound sleep:** A healthy lifestyle, which seems the easiest of them all is also the most significant. our lifestyle and diet have a significant impact on the health of our heart. There should be a sufficient interval between each meal. It is recommended to wait three hours between each meal. Another essential element to keeping our heart healthy is sleep. Each day, one must get at least seven hours of quality sleep. It has been proven to treat hormonal problems and enhance immunity while reducing chronic inflammation and managing physical and emotional stress.

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