

Letter to the editor

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# Neurosyphilis: a masked evildoer

- Flood et al. (1998) found that less than 1/3 patients with neurosyphilis examined between 1970 and 1990 presented with psychiatric symptomatology.
- 86% of subjects with neurosyphilis examined between 1985 and 2005 exhibited psychiatric symptoms.
- Data indicate a global change in the clinical presentation of neurosyphilis over the past years, with neuropsychiatric symptomatology being more common.

- Włodarczyk et al. (2017) presented two case reports of prominent cognitive decline in patients with neurosyphilis, initially diagnosed with early-onset dementia.
- One of the subjects had a history of loss of sight, which is believed to be the first symptom of neurosyphilis associated with optic nerve neuropathy.
- Both subjects were otherwise asymptomatic and eventually revealed abnormalities of angiogenic origin on brain MRI that led to broadening the differential diagnosis with regards to neurosyphilis.

- The serological examination is the gold standard for diagnosis of neurosyphilis.
- The importance of a multidisciplinary approach involving physicians with expertise in different fields, to facilitate adequate diagnosis and treatment, is emphasized.
- With the general change in clinical presentation of neurosyphilis symptoms over the years, the emphasis on meticulous differential diagnosis is of particular importance.