

[Sinusitis and ocular motility disorders]

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BACKGROUND

Secondary inflammatory orbital involvement due to acute or chronic sinusitis is common. The pneumatized system of the paranasal sinuses is abut to the bones of the orbit in up to 80 percent, therefore the association is a seductive theory due to their anatomic closeness. Typically, sinusitis can influence ocular motility by affecting single muscles or a combination of muscles/cranial nerves due to a local inflammatory tissue reaction. The expected picture would be a more or less complex restriction of eye movements.

PATIENTS AND METHODS

In this case study nine consecutive patients were prospectively included between January 2006 and August 2007.

RESULTS

Five of the patients did not experience any motility disorder, the other four had a restricted motility. Case reports of the four patients are presented to demonstrate the range of ocular motility disorders related to sinusitis.

CONCLUSIONS

Orbital complications due to sinusitis include motility disorders among others. They can even cause orbital sepsis and cavernous sinus thrombosis. On the one hand sinusitis can affect almost the whole spectrum of ocular motility disorders, on the other hand it may mask a dangerous cerebral aneurysm. The "close-lying" connections, as seductive they are, should not divert from the rule: infrequent causes are infrequent and frequent causes are frequent!

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| type | journal paper/review (Translation2::getLang(): unknown language "". Use Translation2::setLang() to set a default language.) |
| date of publishing | 5-2008 |
| journal title | Klin Monbl Augenheilkd (225/5) |
| ISSN print | 0023-2165 |
| pages | 401-7 |