"Twist of the Tongue: Isolated 12th Cranial Nerve Palsy in Cervical Tubercular Lymphadenopathy"

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Aim

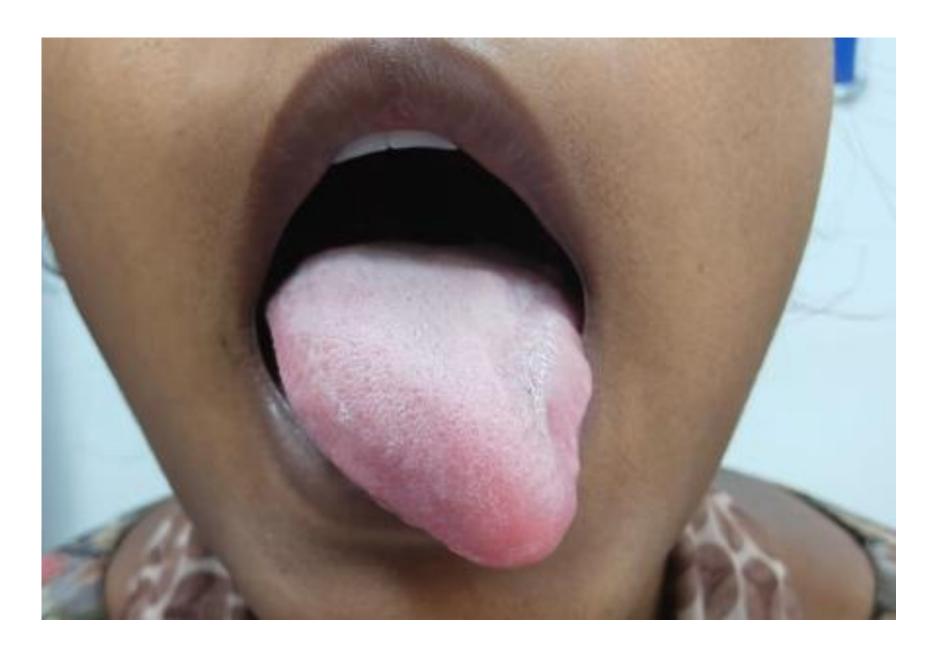
□While cervical tubercular lymphadenopathy is a common extrapulmonary form of tuberculosis, cranial nerve involvement is exceedingly rare. Isolated 12th cranial nerve (hypoglossal nerve) palsy is particularly unusual. We report a rare case of isolated left hypoglossal nerve palsy in a young female secondary to compressive cervical tubercular lymphadenopathy.

Methodology

■We present the clinical profile, diagnostic evaluation, imaging findings, and treatment response of a 17-year-old girl with isolated left hypoglossal nerve palsy associated with tuberculous lymphadenopathy.

Clinical Presentation

- □ 17-year-old female with slurred speech and tongue deviation for 3 weeks
- ☐ Exam: Isolated left 12th cranial nerve palsy
- ☐ Tongue deviated to left with mild atrophy
- ☐ No other cranial nerves or limb motor deficits
- ☐ Firm, non-tender lymph node at left Level 1b (submandibular region)



Investigations

- ☐MRI neck: Enlarged necrotic lymph node near hypoglossal canal
- \square \longrightarrow Mass effect on left hypoglossal nerve
- ☐ FNAC: Granulomatous inflammation consistent with tuberculosis
- ☐ GeneXpert: Positive for Mycobacterium tuberculosis

Treatment

- ☐ Standard 4-drug anti-tubercular therapy initiated
- ☐ Regular follow-up advised
- ☐ At 6 months follow-up:
- \square \rightarrow Persistent tongue deviation
- \square \longrightarrow Mild improvement in articulation
- ☐ No new neurological deficits

Discussion

- ☐ Isolated hypoglossal nerve palsy is a rare presentation of cervical tubercular lymphadenopathy
- ☐ Mass effect from lymph node near hypoglossal canal likely cause
- ☐ Anti-tubercular therapy remains cornerstone of treatment
- ☐ Residual deficits may persist despite therapy

Conclusion

- ☐ This case highlights an uncommon presentation of cervical tubercular lymphadenopathy with isolated hypoglossal nerve palsy in an adolescent.
- □ Early imaging and tissue diagnosis are essential for timely treatment and to prevent permanent neurological sequelae.