findings were acquired on 1.5-T scanners and that this entails some limitations. High b-value DWI requires a hardware upgrade because most scanners cannot generate a 40-mT/m gradient field [6]. Despite the lower MR signal intensity and lower signal-to-noise ratio on high b-value images [8], 3-T DWI is at least as good as, and in some ways superior to, 1.5-T DWI for assessing hyperacute stroke [9].

We postulate that one reason for missed acute ischemic stroke might be the conspicuity of acute ischemic lesions on diffusion-weighted images, which is related to the b-value. In some cases (as in this one) higher b-values might offer an opportunity for earlier lesion detection. We found that DWMI,000 performed on the 3-T scanner was superior for the identification of ischemic lesions. Our findings suggest that the PWI-DWI mismatch time window is shorter than was previously thought. Studies are underway in our laboratory to determine the optimal b value for the assessment of acute stroke. Based on our findings, we suggest that high b-value DWI is useful for the selection of thrombolytic therapy in patients with acute stroke.

References

Kaoru Kurisu, MD, PhD
Department of Neurosurgery
Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
Hiroshima University
1-2-3 Kasumi, Minami-ku, Hiroshima, 734-8551 (Japan)
Tel. +81 82 257 5225, Fax +81 82 257 5229
E-Mail kuka422@hiroshima-u.ac.jp

A 76-year-old female with high blood pressure and atrial fibrillation as cerebrovascular risk factors was admitted because of sudden left hemiparesis and disarthria with a right periorbital headache. Transcranial Doppler ultrasound showed increased velocity in the right carotid siphon. Her cranial CT was normal. She was anticoagulated because of carotid siphon stenosis with low-molecular-weight heparin (0.6 ml subcutaneous nadroparin calcium every 12 h). An angio-CT showed calcified plaque in the right carotid siphon with a large thrombus (fig. 1A, B), resulting in a high-grade stenosis. We suggested the thrombus formation was due to a cardiac embolus stopped in the right

Fig. 1. Intra- and extracranial angio-CT. Coronal and lateral projections showed a large thrombus in the right internal carotid artery (arrows, red in the online version).
siphon stenosis and a retrograde enlargement mechanism. The patient was under anticoagulation. An angioCT at 10 days showed complete thrombus resolution. At discharge, she had slight left ataxic hemiparesis (NIHSS = 4). At 1 year she had an mRS = 1.

This case indicates that large thrombi may be dissolved by anticoagulant therapy with low-molecular-weight heparin, although its lytic activity has never been demonstrated. The short recanalization time was probably due to an acute unorganized thrombus.

References

Montserrat González Delgado
Department of Neurology
Celestino Villamil s/n.
ES–33006 Oviedo (Spain)
Tel. +34 985 10 80 00, ext. 36 206, E-Mail mglezdelgado@yahoo.es