

A 49-year-old woman presenting with aphasia

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CASE REPORT

A 49-year-old woman presented to the Emergency Department with aphasia; the time of onset was unknown. Her past medical history revealed a syphilis infection in 1987 and alcohol abuse. On neurological examination she spoke mainly non-existent words, her comprehension was relatively unaffected. Furthermore, there was a mild right-sided central facial palsy, right-sided hyperreflexia, and bilateral Babinski signs. Computed tomographic imaging of the brain showed a hypodense lesion in the left hemisphere. Magnetic resonance imaging of the brain revealed hyperintense, confluent grey matter and white matter lesions in the left hemisphere (*figure 1*). The lesions were isointense on T₁ weighted images and enhanced after administration of gadolinium.

WHAT IS YOUR DIAGNOSIS?

See page 222 for the answer to this photo quiz.

Figure 1. MRI images of the brain

Panel A: Axial FLAIR image showing hyperintense, confluent grey matter and white matter lesions in the region of the left middle cerebral artery

Panel B: Axial diffusion weighted image showing diffusion restriction around the left middle cerebral artery

Panel C: T₁ axial image after administration of gadolinium showing enhancement of the lesions

Panel D: Axial T₁ image two months later showing a reduced degree of enhancement after administration of gadolinium

