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Pediatric Neuroimaging: Clinical Correlations and Case Studies

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Perspective

Pediatric neuroimaging plays a crucial role in understanding the developing brain, diagnosing neurological disorders and guiding treatment in children. Unlike adults, the pediatric brain is constantly evolving, making imaging interpretation more complex and dynamic. Radiologic evaluation through modalities such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Computed Tomography (CT) and ultrasonography provides invaluable insights into both normal brain maturation and disease processes. These imaging tools, when correlated with clinical findings, help clinicians identify congenital, metabolic, infectious and traumatic conditions that affect the central nervous system during childhood.

MRI is considered the gold standard in pediatric neuroimaging due to its superior soft-tissue contrast and absence of ionizing radiation. It allows for detailed visualization of brain anatomy, myelination patterns and white matter integrity. MRI is particularly valuable in diagnosing congenital malformations such as agenesis of the corpus callosum, Chiari malformations and cortical dysplasias. In cases of developmental delay or epilepsy, MRI helps detect structural lesions like hippocampal sclerosis or cortical abnormalities, providing vital information for both prognosis and surgical planning. Diffusion-Weighted Imaging (DWI) and Functional MRI (fMRI) further enhance diagnostic capabilities by assessing white matter tracts and mapping brain activity, respectively [1].

Clinical correlation is fundamental in pediatric neuroimaging interpretation. For instance, an infant presenting with seizures and delayed milestones may show cortical malformations on MRI, while a child with acute headache and vomiting could reveal posterior fossa tumors. Similarly, infectious diseases such as meningitis or encephalitis exhibit distinctive radiologic signs enhancement of the meninges, cerebral edema, or abscess formation that align closely with clinical symptoms and laboratory findings.

In conclusion, pediatric neuroimaging serves as an essential bridge between clinical presentation and diagnosis, combining visual detail with medical insight. Through modalities like MRI, CT and ultrasound, clinicians gain a comprehensive view of the child's brain, enabling early detection, accurate classification and effective management of neurological disorders. By integrating imaging data with clinical and developmental context, pediatric neuroimaging continues to advance both diagnostic precision and the quality of care for young patients [2].

Keywords: Pediatric neuroimaging; Brain MRI; Neurological diagnosis

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Conflict of Interest

None.

References

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