CLINICAL SNAPSHOT

“Cerebral Heartbreak”

A 64-year-old woman was brought to our emergency department with a 2-day history of right lower limb paralysis and psychomotor retardation. Initial CCT showed a heart-shaped left frontal infarct (Figure). Although she recovered well from the paralysis, over the next few days she developed *marked* symptoms of depression, with avolition and loss of appetite. She lost 13 kg (20% of her body weight) over the following 5 months and continued to suffer from avolition, daytime fatigue, and concentration difficulties, despite psychotherapy and treatment with citalopram 20 mg q.d. “Post-stroke depression” has an incidence of up to 31 % , especially following left anterior infarctions, as illustrated by the case of “broken heart” after stroke.

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