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WIDESPREAD SMALLPOX. HALLUCINATIONS AFTER AN OCCIPITAL LOBE ISCHAEMIA EPISODE

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Visual hallucinations are not an infrequent reason for psychiatric consultation, oftenly we found that are produced, as in this case, by an organic background. A 72 years old woman was entered in the hospital and she had an open-heart surgery (mitral prosthesis replacement) Two days after the surgery she begins to have visual hallucinations. The visual hallucinations consisted in images of family pictures, and images of person's faces with eruptions due to a smallpox infection.

She was able to see that the hallucinations weren't real, and it didn't exist secondary delirium nor changes in the condition of consciousness.

We have to outline that the patient just after the surgery suffered auricular fibrillation, and 24 hours after was detected and the anticoagulant treatment started. After the interview we suspected that the patient wasn't suffering of psychiatric affects nor an organic related delirium. The ophthalmologist rejects a Charles Bonnet Syndrome, neurologists diagnosed a cerebral stroke, located in the occipital region, which was confirmed by a TCA 72 hours later. During the time that the patient was in auricular fibrillation grew up a thrombus that provoked the stroke which resulted in visual hallucinations, in which the patient revealed her memories (her son have had smallpox during vacations in Africa). Maybe this outlines the interconnections between affective memories and the central system dysfunctions, standing up the memories when the primary function is changed. Is really important to realize a good multidisciplinary diagnosis in case of having cases like this one.