Case Report

Cephalothoracopagus: Case Report with Endocrine Study

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Summary. A case of cephalothoracopagus syncephalus conjoined twins was diagnosed by pre-natal amniography. Hormone levels in maternal blood, umbilical blood and amniotic fluid were measured.

Key words: Cephalothoracopagus — Conjoined twins — Prolactin — Growth hormone — Steroid hormone

The incidence of cephalothoracopagus, a rare malformation, is estimated to be approximately 1/50,000 deliveries (Feldmann 1937). Three variants of this malformation are generally recognized. In all variants the cerebellum, brain stem and spinal cord are double. When there is on face with two ears and a single cerebrum the monster is called a deradelphus. When there is a single face with four ears, two in the back of the head, it is called a syncephalus. The final variant has two faces on opposite sides of the head with half of each belonging to each component and is called janiceps (Potter 1961). Our present case is of interest not only because of its rarity but also because a prenatal diagnosis was made by amniography and because hormone levels in maternal blood, umbilical blood and amniotic fluid were studied, probably for the first time in such a case.

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The mother was a 42-year old married woman gravida 3, para 0 with an essentially negative past medical history. The two previous pregnancies ended in spontaneous abortions. The patient's parents and her husband were normal and healthy. There was no family history of congenital malformations. Pregnancy appeared normal until 19 weeks. At 27 weeks gestation, the height of the uterine fundus was 35 cm. Polyhydramnios was noted. An amniogram was therefore done and two fetal bodies were seen in the upper abdomen and a single head with two well defined orbits in the lower maternal abdomen (Fig. 1). A diagnosis of a cephalothoracopagus monster was made. At 28 weeks pregnancy, uterine contractions of...
Fig. 1. The prenatal amniogram showing two fetal bodies and a single head with two orbits.

Fig. 2. Anterior view of cephalothoracopagus monster.