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Anaemia as a cause for pseudotumor cerebri syndrome

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Anaemia is a rare cause of raised intracranial pressure or pseudotumor cerebri syndrome (PTC). We performed a retrospective study of patients who were newly diagnosed with raised intracranial pressure through the Medical Eye Unit from Jan 2014 – Aug 2018. 120 patients (97.5% female) aged 19-68 years were included. We identified twelve (10%) patients who had a haemoglobin level of less than 110. Of these, four patients (Hb range 79-108) had anaemia as the only cause of PTC with resultant resolution of symptoms following treatment

of anaemia. Five patients had both anaemia (Hb range 72-98) and obesity (BMI range 33-45) as contributing causes. Two patients with obesity (BMI 40, 54) and obstructive sleep apnoea had Hb of 92 and 108 respectively. In one patient (Hb 108), obesity (BMI 44) was the main cause of PTC. We highlight the importance of screening and treating for anaemia in patients with pseudotumor cerebri syndrome. Treating anaemia in this setting can result in resolution of raised intracranial pressure.

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