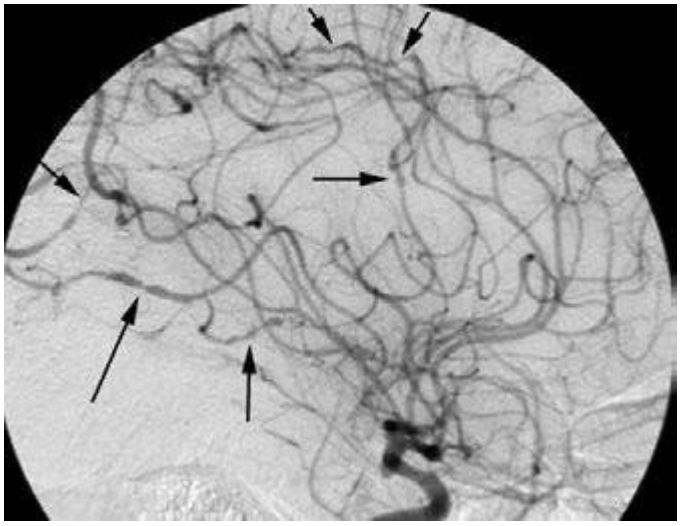

**FIGURE 446-5 Cerebral angiogram from a 32-year-old male with central nervous system vasculopathy.** Dramatic beading (*arrows*) typical of vasculopathy is seen.

branches (<2 mm diameter) of the main intracranial arteries and produces small ischemic infarcts in the brain, optic nerve, and spinal cord. The CSF often shows pleocytosis, and the protein level is elevated. *Primary central nervous system vasculitis* is rare; small or medium-sized vessels are usually affected, without apparent systemic vasculitis. The differential diagnosis includes other inflammatory vasculopathies including infection (tuberculous, fungal), sarcoidosis, angiocentric lymphoma, carcinomatous meningitis, and noninflammatory causes such as atherosclerosis, emboli, connective tissue disease, vasospasm, migraine-associated vasculopathy, and drug-associated causes. Some cases develop in the postpartum period and are self-limited.

Patients with any form of vasculopathy may present with insidious progression of combined white and gray matter infarctions, prominent headache, and cognitive decline. Brain biopsy or high-resolution conventional x-ray angiography is usually required to make the diagnosis (Fig. 446-5). An inflammatory profile found on lumbar puncture favors an inflammatory cause. In cases where inflammation is confirmed, aggressive immunosuppression with glucocorticoids, and often cyclophosphamide, is usually necessary to prevent progression; a diligent investigation for infectious causes such as tuberculosis is essential prior to immunosuppression. With prompt recognition and treatment, many patients can make an excellent recovery.

*Drugs*, in particular amphetamines and perhaps cocaine, may cause stroke on the basis of acute hypertension or drug-induced vasculopathy. No data exist on the value of any treatment. Phenylpropanolamine has been linked with intracranial hemorrhage, as has cocaine and methamphetamine, perhaps related to a drug-induced vasculopathy. *Moyamoya disease* is a poorly understood occlusive disease involving large intracranial arteries, especially the distal internal carotid artery and the stem of the MCA and ACA. Vascular inflammation is absent. The lenticulostriate arteries develop a rich collateral circulation around the occlusive lesion, which gives the impression of a "puff of smoke" (*moyamoya* in Japanese) on conventional x-ray angiography. Other collaterals include transdural anastomoses between the cortical surface branches of the meningeal and scalp arteries. The disease occurs mainly in Asian children or young adults, but the appearance may be identical in adults who have atherosclerosis, particularly in association with diabetes. Intracranial hemorrhage may result from rupture of the transdural and pial anastomotic channels; thus, anticoagulation is risky. Breakdown of dilated lenticulostriate arteries may produce intraparenchymal hemorrhage, and progressive occlusion of large surface arteries can occur, producing large-artery distribution strokes. Surgical bypass of extracranial carotid arteries to the dura or MCAs may prevent stroke and hemorrhage.

*Posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome* (PRES) can occur with head injury, seizure, migraine, sympathomimetic drug use, eclampsia, and in the postpartum period (Chap. 463e). The pathophysiology is uncertain but likely involves a hyperperfusion state with widespread segmental vasoconstriction and cerebral edema. Patients complain of headache and manifest fluctuating neurologic symptoms and signs, especially visual symptoms. Sometimes cerebral infarction ensues, but typically the clinical and imaging findings suggest that ischemia reverses completely. MRI findings are characteristic with the edema present within the occipital lobes but can be generalized and do not respect any single vascular territory. A closely related *reversible cerebral vasoconstriction syndrome* (RCVS) typically presents with sudden, severe headache closely mimicking SAH. Patients may experience ischemic infarction and intracerebral hemorrhage and typically have new-onset, severe hypertension. Conventional x-ray angiography reveals changes in the vascular caliber throughout the hemispheres resembling vasculitis, but the process is noninflammatory. Oral calcium channel blockers may be effective in producing remission, and recurrence is rare.

*Leukoaraiosis*, or *periventricular white matter disease,* is the result of multiple small-vessel infarcts within the subcortical white matter. It is readily seen on CT or MRI scans as areas of white matter injury surrounding the ventricles and within the corona radiata. The pathophysiologic basis of the disease is lipohyalinosis of small penetrating arteries within the white matter, likely produced by chronic hypertension. Patients with periventricular white matter disease may develop a subcortical dementia syndrome, and it is likely that this common form of dementia may be delayed or prevented with antihypertensive medications (Chap. 448).

*CADASIL* (cerebral autosomal dominant arteriopathy with subcortical infarcts and leukoencephalopathy) is an inherited disorder that presents as small-vessel strokes, progressive dementia, and extensive symmetric white matter changes often including the anterior temporal lobes visualized by MRI. Approximately 40% of patients have migraine with aura, often manifest as transient motor or sensory deficits. Onset is usually in the fourth or fifth decade of life. This autosomal dominant condition is caused by one of several mutations in *Notch-3*, a member of a highly conserved gene family characterized by epidermal growth factor repeats in its extracellular domain. Other monogenic ischemic stroke syndromes include cerebral autosomal recessive arteriopathy with subcortical infarcts and leukoencephalopathy (CARASIL) and hereditary endotheliopathy, retinopathy, nephropathy, and stroke (HERNS). Fabry's disease also produces both a large-vessel arteriopathy and small-vessel infarctions.

## TRANSIENT ISCHEMIC ATTACKS

TIAs are episodes of stroke symptoms that last only briefly; the standard definition of duration is <24 h, but most TIAs last <1 h. If a relevant brain infarction is identified on brain imaging, the clinical entity is now classified as stroke regardless of the duration of symptoms. The causes of TIA are similar to the causes of ischemic stroke, but because TIAs may herald stroke, they are an important risk factor that should be considered separately and urgently. TIAs may arise from emboli to the brain or from in situ thrombosis of an intracranial vessel. With a TIA, the occluded blood vessel reopens and neurologic function is restored.

The risk of stroke after a TIA is ~10–15% in the first 3 months, with most events occurring in the first 2 days. This risk can be directly estimated using the well-validated ABCD$^2$ score (Table 446-5). Therefore, urgent evaluation and treatment are justified. Because etiologies for stroke and TIA are identical, evaluation for TIA should parallel that of stroke (Figs. 446-1 and 446-3). The improvement characteristic of TIA is a contraindication to thrombolysis. However, because the risk of subsequent stroke in the first few days after a TIA is high, the opportunity to give rtPA rapidly if a stroke occurs may justify hospital admission for most patients. The combination of aspirin and clopidogrel has been recently reported to prevent stroke following TIA better than aspirin alone in a large Chinese randomized trial and is undergoing similar evaluation in an ongoing National Institutes of Health (NIH)-sponsored trial (POINT study).