Spontaneous episodic hypothermia combined with hyperhidrosis is an extremely rare condition that was first described accompanying agenesis of the corpus callosum by Shapiro, et al. To our knowledge, we report on the first patient in whom hypothermia and hyperhidrosis has occurred after subarachnoid hemorrhage (SAH).

This 67-year-old man suffered a Hunt and Hess Grade IV SAH after rupture of an aneurysm of the anterior communicating artery (Fig. 1 left). Starting 10 days after ictus he presented with several episodes of hypothermia to 32°C (Fig. 2). These were characterized by sudden onset of massive hyperhidrosis, agitation, and drowsiness, with a maximum duration of 10 hours. Hydrocephalus and vasospasm were not demonstrated on computerized tomography (CT) scans and cerebral angiograms, respectively, at that time. Results of further diagnostic work-up, for example, endocrinological studies, were unremarkable. Magnetic resonance (MR) imaging revealed a lesion in the left gyrus rectus that corresponded to the initial hemorrhage (Fig. 1 right). No abnormalities were present in the hypothalamus or the corpus callosum, as has been described in a few reported cases.

Frontobasal hemorrhage in proximity to the hypothalamic temperature-regulating centers or vasospasm of perforating vessels supplying the hypothalamus that were undetectable by conventional angiography constitute possible pathophysiological explanations for this phenomenon. The definite cause, however, is unknown. Episodic hypothermia and hyperhidrosis must be considered as a rare complication after SAH.

References