A 39-year-old male was found unresponsive at home with no h/o trauma. Apparent sudden death with no significant medical history. He recently complained of worsening headaches for several weeks. Gross photos only

Contributed by Dr. John Hu
Gross photo 1

Contributed by Dr. John Hu
Diagnosis:

- Benign colloid cyst

Contributed by Dr. John Hu
Discussion

• Colloid cysts are benign intracranial cystic lesions, usually occurring in the anterior roof of the third ventricle (Fig 1).

Fig 1. Schematic drawing of cerebral ventricles
Colloid Cyst

• They vary in size and become symptomatic when larger than 1 cm in diameter. Obstruction of the Foramen of Monro (interventricular foramen, which connect the lateral ventricles to the third ventricle) often causes secondary hydrocephalus resulting in symptoms.

• There is severe cerebral edema of gyri with disappearance of sulci on the cerebral surfaces (Fig. 2)
Fig. 2: Superior cerebral surfaces with edema and disappearance of sulci.
Fig. 3. A coronal section shows dilated lateral ventricles and the third ventricle, with a cystic lesion in the third ventricle.
Fig. 4. Close-up view of this light brown cyst with colloid contents.