

Intracranial cyst differential diagnosis

Differential diagnosis of a cystic brain lesion must contemplate primary [neoplasm](#), [metastases](#) (lung and breast neoplasms are the most common cause), brain [abscess](#), [tuberculoma](#) and [neurocysticercosis](#). (NCC).

see [Cystic tumor](#).

A [craniopharyngioma](#) (CP) is an embryonic [malformation](#) of the [sellar region](#) and [parasellar region](#).

Its relation to [Rathke's cleft cyst](#) (RCC) is controversial, and both lesions have been hypothesized to lie on a continuum of [ectodermal cystic lesions](#) of the [sellar region](#).

[Porencephaly](#)

1. [Intracranial arachnoid cysts](#): Typically lined with meningotheelial cells
2. [suprasellar cyst](#) from dilated [third ventricle](#)
3. [interhemispheric cyst](#) from [porencephaly](#)
4. [neuroectodermal cysts](#) (gliopendymal cysts): intraparenchymal, located near ventricles
5. old [infarct](#): if it communicates with a ventricle it is called a [porencephalic cyst](#)
6. tumor cysts (the solid portion may sometimes be isodense to brain on CT):
 - a) [ganglioglioma](#): usually solid but may appear cystic on CT
 - b) [pilocytic astrocytoma](#): usually has enhancing mural nodule
 - c) neurilemmomas may be cystic
 - d) supratentorial ependymomas are often cystic
7. infectious
 - a) abscess
 - b) cysticercosis: see [Neurocysticercosis](#)
 - c) hydatid cyst: see Echinococcosis
8. [pineal cysts](#)
9. [colloid cyst](#)
10. [Rathke's cleft cyst](#)

11. [giant aneurysm](#)
 12. on CT, a low density non-enhancing tumor can mimic a cyst
 13. chronic subdural hematoma or hygroma may mimic a cyst
 14. [Posterior fossa cyst:](#)
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[Choroid plexus cyst of the third ventricle.](#)

[Colloid cyst.](#)

[Cystic lesion](#)

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