

‘Suddenly everybody in the world looked like a creature in a horror movie’: Rare condition causes man to see distorted ‘demon’ faces

“I just woke up and was sitting on the couch watching TV when my roommate came into the room, and (looking at him) I’m like, ‘What am I seeing?’ Then his girlfriend walked in and her face was the same,” [59-year-old Victor] Sharrah told CNN.

Each of the once-familiar faces had a grotesque grimace, elongated eyes and deeply etched scars. When turned to the side, pointy ears suddenly appeared, he said, much like those of Spock, the Vulcan first officer on the USS Enterprise in Star Trek.

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“It’s like staring at demons,” he added. “Imagine waking up one morning and suddenly everybody in the world looks like a creature in a horror movie.”

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With so little knowledge available, many people with PMO can be diagnosed with schizophrenia or other similar hallucinatory conditions and put on anti-psychotic medications or even institutionalized, said Antonio Vitor Reis Goncalves Mello, a doctoral student in psychological and brain sciences at Dartmouth, who is first author on the case study.

However, science now knows that people can develop PMO after a brain injury, tumor or infection, or after seizures such as in epilepsy, he said.

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