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Case Report
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AN UNUSUSAL PRESENTATION OF POLYSEROSITIS

Dr. Harini G. L.* and Dr. Nagaraj B. S.

India.

*Corresponding Author: Dr. Harini G. L.

India

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INTRODUCTION

Melioidosis or Whitmore's disease is an infectious saprophytic disease caused by Burkholderia Pseudomallei. The disease is most prevalent in South East Asia and Northern Australia. Thailand has the maximum reported cases. ^[1] In India, it is more prevalent in the South Western coast; however, there are no data on its prevalence and most of the cases go unrecognized. ^[2] The disease is transmitted via exposure of broken skin to contaminated soil, particularly wet paddy fields. Other mode of transmission is via aerosols.

Important risk factors for the disease are occupational exposure, i.e., agriculturist, type 2 diabetes mellitus, immune deficiency state and renal disorder.

Clinical features of melioidosis are highly variable. They range from asymptomatic disease, localized skin ulcers or abscesses and acute fulminant septicaemia to chronic infection. Predisposing factors for melioidosis include chronic diseases such as diabetes, chronic renal failure, chronic lung disease and alcoholism. [1-3] Timely diagnosis and prompt institution of correct antibiotics will prevent high morbidity and mortality.

CASE REPORT

We present a case of a 52 year old female, from Assam who was a known diabetic from past 15 years on treatment with oral hypoglycemics and no other co morbidities. She presented to us with history of fever from 10days, which was high grade intermittent and associated with breathlessness and distention of abdomen, but there was no history of cough with expectoration or chest pain. No H/o decreased urinary output or No H/o loss of weight.

On examination, she was febrile with temperature of 100.2f, tachypnoeic with respiratory rate of 32/min and tachycardia was present with heart rate of 108/min. There was no pallor, icterus, cyanosis, clubbing, lymphadenopathy or pedal edema.

Respiratory system examination was significant in the form of absent breath sounds in bilateral infra axillary and infra scapular areas but no added sounds and per abdomen showed mild hepatosplenomegaly and evidence of free fluid. Other system examination was normal.

Investigations showed increased total count of 13,600cells/cumm with Neutrophillic predominance of 80% and elevated ESR of 92. Her RBS was 206 with HbA1C of 7.6. Her renal and hepatic functions were normal.

Her chest x ray was done which showed bilateral moderate pleural effusion.



USG abdomen showed Hepatosplenomegaly with moderate ascites.

Ascitic fluid analysis was done which was exudative with Neutrophillic predominance. Protein: 4.8g/dl, Glucose: 108mg/dl, Cells: 316, Morphology: 70% neutrophils, ADA: 4.8

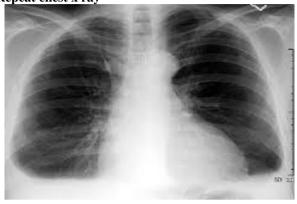
Pleural fluid analysis was also done which was also exudative with Neutrophillic predominance. Cells: 1100, predominant neutrophils, Protein: 4.6g/dl, Glucose: 92mg/dl, ADA: 9, Pleural fluid gram stain showed gram

www.ejpmr.com 457

negative bacilli and Culture after 48hrs of incubation grew B.pseudomallei.

She was started on intravenous ceftazidime 2g 8th hourly. she became symptomatically better and was afebrile by 10th day of admission. She was discharged after 2 weeks of antibiotics. Repeat USG after 2 weeks showed minimal ascites with mild splenomegaly.

Repeat chest x ray



DISCUSSION

Melioidosis is endemic in Southeast Asia and northern Australia. In parts of northeastern Thailand, it is the most common cause of severe community-acquired sepsis. The first reported case in the northern territory of Australia occurred in 1960 and melioidosis is now recognized as the most common cause of fatal community—acquired bacteremic pneumonia. In several published series, pneumonia is the most frequent presentation of melioidosis and is involved in approximately half of all cases.

In our report, co-morbidity, and age were most relevant. B. pseudomallei is visualized as a slender Gram-negative bacillus with rounded ends and bipolar staining, and are vacuolated; it is often described as having a safety-pin appearance. It is oxidase positive, and on culture, the organisms demonstrate different colony morphology. In this case, on Gram stain the pathogen was observed as Gram-negative bacilli. Culture in blood agar yielded a small, dry, earth-smelling colony.

Isolation of B. pseudomallei from the body fluids of patients remains the gold standard in the diagnosis and requires the use of selective media for non-sterile specimens. Gram stain and other histopathological stains are not specific for the organism.

Skin and soft tissue infection is a common manifestation of Melioidosis, and may result from hematogenous spread and can be the source of systemic infection. Presentation may be of rapid progression, similar to necrotizing fasciitis. Bone and joint infections are uncommon (4–12%) and may be difficult to diagnose, and systemic manifestations are prominent. Surgical drainage and long courses of antibiotics are required.¹⁻⁵

In our case, the patient developed polyserositis without involvement of lung parenchyma which is rare in reported cases of Melioidosis Currie et al. reported seven cases of septic shock with high mortality (100%). Regarding other non-bacteremic forms; they reported five cases of osteomyelitis and septic arthritis with no mortality (0%). In published series from Thailand and Australia, other frequent presentations have been suppurative parotitis, prostatic abscesses, urinary infection and encephalomyelitis syndrome. [3,5]

Several randomized, controlled trials have examined intensive phase interventions in severe Melioidosis and are the basis of ceftazidime-based regimens. [1,5] Ceftazidime has been shown to be of benefit in the treatment of this disease in a sequential open-label randomized trial of ceftazidime chloramphenicol-doxycycline-trimethoprimsulfamethoxazole (known as conventional therapy) in severe disease, at least for 6 months. Other trials have used amoxicillin-clavulanate and imipenem, granulocyte colony stimulating factor (G-CSF) and activated protein C in severe cases of sepsis. For maintenance therapy, amoxicillin-clavulanate vs. chloramphenicol, doxycycline, trimethoprim-sulphamethoxazole ciprofloxacin have been recommended, with a duration of 12-20 weeks.[1]

CONCLUSIONS

Melioidosis is a common disease but rarely suspected and detected. Especially in tropical countries like India. In our case the associated co morbidity diabetes was one of the predisposing factors. It s rare presentation in the form of high fever and polyserositis without parenchymal pulmonary involvement is one of the interesting things to be noted in our case.

Also, since the relapse rate and mortality is high with this disease, there is a need for early diagnosis and treatment particularly in India where it is under diagnosed.

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www.ejpmr.com 458

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www.ejpmr.com 459