Liver Transplantation in Postinfantile Giant Cell Hepatitis presenting as Fulminant Liver Failure due to Herbal Traditional Medicine in Mexico

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Introduction:

Postinfantile Giant Cell Hepatitis (PIGCH) is a rare medical condition characterized by the presence of multinucleated giant cells in liver parenchyma, there are around 100 cases reported in literature. PIGCH has been associated to autoimmune diseases, viral infections, metabolic disorders and hepatotoxic agents. The clinical course is rapidly progressive in about half of patients leading to death or the need of liver transplantation, in few cases the course is insidious and the patient develops cirrhosis.

Method:

We describe the case of a 14 years old female patient who presented at hospital admission with grade III encephalopathy and jaundice. Two weeks before she was treated with traditional herbal medicine known as Muicle and Panícua because of hyporexia and depression. Laboratories were bilirubin 22, ALT 1858, AST 2100, INR 3.2, CT negative viral serologies, negative for drugs and immunologic tests, blood cultures also were negative. CT scan showed mild cerebral edema. The patient course was complicated with upper respiratory tract hemorrhage and coma requiring mechanical ventilation. The diagnosis was fulminant liver failure fulfilling Royal King’s College criteria. The case was discussed at Transplant Committee and accepted for national emergency liver transplantation.

Result:

After nine days, the patient underwent orthotopic liver transplantation, the clinical findings at surgery were multiple large nodules in the liver, the postoperative course at ICU was uneventful, but when extubated the patient showed left hemiparesia that completely resolved in about 2 weeks with physiotherapy. The patient is now 16 years old with normal liver function and physical activity. Pathologic report described cholestasis, giant multinucleated cells, necrosis and focal inflammation consistent with hepatotoxic induced PIGCH.

Conclusion:

PIGCH was related to Muicle and Panícua both mexican herbal traditional medicine for gastrointestinal and many disorders. This is the first case of PIGCH and liver transplantation in a patient taking this herbs. Panícua and Muicle must be considered severe hepatotoxic agents. Liver transplantation team must be involved in every PIGCH patient.