

POST PARTUM FACTOR VIII C INHIBITORS

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INTRODUCTION

Factor VIIIc (FVIIIc) inhibitors are antibodies directed against the FVIIIc molecule, producing bleeding manifestations. These may be idiopathic or secondary to a variety of diseases the latter being more common. Occurrence of FVIIIc inhibitors in the post partum period is rare. We report here a patient who developed FVIIIc inhibitors during the post partum period.

CASE REPORT

SM, a 24 years old primipara was admitted with history of post partum haemorrhage following a forceps delivery 20 days back. She continued to have bleeding from the episiotomy wound and gaping of the wound, though exploration and resuturing was done a week after the delivery. She also developed continuous, moderate grade fever 3 days later. The

patient was given 35 units blood transfusion over a period of 20 days. Prior to admission, the bleeding continued unabated. There was no past history of any bleeding episodes.

On examination, the patient was normotensive with a pulse rate of 84 per minute. She had moderate pallor. She had continuous dripping of blood per vaginum. An exploration was done on the next day and 4 cms of anterior rectal wall was bulging into the vagina and the anal sphincter was lost. The vulval haematoma was drained and the bleeding points stitched. Her coagulation profile showed a prolonged APTT (130 sec) and presence of FVIIIc inhibitors 80 Bethesda units Haematological findings are given in Table I. Biochemical parameters and ultrasound of abdomen were within normal limit. The patient was treated with 10 units of cryoprecipitate and Inj. Prednisolone 8 mg IV alongwith antibiotics and other supportive measures. She gradually improved and the steroids

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Accepted for Publication on 21.05.1994.

Table I
Haematological parameters

Tests	23.2.91	25.2.91	26.2.91	26.4.91	15.2.92
Platelet count ($10^9/l$)	170	225	300	280	250
Prothrombin time (12-16 sec)	15	15	15	12	12
Activated Partial Thromboplastin time (35-45 sec)	130	155	185	63	40
Thrombin time (12-15 sec)	15	18	—	—	—
Fibrinogen (200-400 mg)	253	250	—	—	—
FVIII assay	1%				
Screening for FVIII Inhibitor (Bethesda units)	positive 80	positive	positive	absent	absent

were tapered off. She was discharged 3 weeks later follow up after 1 year revealed disappearance of inhibitors & absence of recurrence of bleeding problems.

COMMENTS

The present case of FVIIIc inhibitors in post partum period, through rare, is not unreported. 28 cases of FVIIIc inhibitors occurring after parturition have been reported by Feinstein (1982). They have shown variable response to therapy. They may either persist for years or may disappear spontaneously. In the majority of cases the inhibitors disappeared after 12 to 18 months of immunosuppressive therapy^{4,5,6}. In the present case the inhibitors completely disappeared after 12

months of immunosuppressive therapy. The absence of any past or family history of bleeding and subsequent recovery with immunosuppressive drugs, suggests it to be of immunologic aetiology following childbirth. Evidence of other immunologic diseases such as lupus erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis and regional enteritis were not present. It would be that an antibody to anti haemophilic factor (AHF) develops due to appearance of an antigen in mother's circulation allied to AHF of foetal origin at the time of birth or even earlier. The exact mechanism of antibody formation in acquired spontaneous haemophiliacs after childbirth, however, needs to be studied further.