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Tick-borne encephalitis presenting as major depressive episode: a case report

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Background: European tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) commonly presents with neurological disturbances, whereas primary psychiatric manifestations are rare.

Aim: To report a case of acute TBE presenting as major depressive episode.

Case report: A 72-year-old man had been suffering from fatigue, poor appetite and tremor of the left hand for 2 weeks. Progression of these symptoms made him believe that he had acquired an incurable and fatal disorder. He repeatedly noted in his diary that 'the end is not far off'. Generalized weakness and fluctuating level of consciousness lead to examination at the Neurologic Department. His psychiatric medical history was unremarkable. Brain MRI, EEG and laboratory examination was normal. Diminished drive, dysthymia, hopelessness and suicidal ideation were found on mental state exam. Diagnosed with major depression he was hospitalized in the psychiatric ward. One day later, he developed a generalized seizure and lab findings supported the diagnosis of European TBE (CSF: 13 cells/ μ L; protein 60 mg/dL; positive TBE-IgM in serum and CSF). Depressive symptoms declined gradually with a combination of psychotherapy, mirtazapin and sertraline. The tremor responded well to propranolol and was seen as unrelated to TBE. He was discharged home 30 days from admission with minimal residual fatigue and low dose mirtazapin.

Conclusion Acute life-threatening psychiatric manifestations can be the predominant presenting but successfully treatable feature of TBE. We conclude that awareness for this condition should be raised in endemic regions and high-level of suspicion for encephalitis maintained with the occurrence of seizures or focal-neurological deficits in acute psychiatric conditions.

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Investigation of coagulation behavior using Rotational Thromboelastometry (Rotem®) in patients with neuroinfectious diseases

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Background: Neuroinfectious diseases are recognized to cause severe dysregulation on inflammation and coagulation behaviors. Dengue, one of the major infectious diseases, manifests neurological complications such as encephalitis and encephalopathy. The mosquito-borne viral infection is said to disrupt the coagulation cascade. Rotational thromboelastometry measures the interactions of coagulation factors, inhibitors and cellular components during the phases of clotting and subsequent lysis over time. Detailed analysis of coagulation parameters was investigated using thromboelastometry and standard coagulation parameter in patients with neuroinfectious diseases, such as dengue, from two different countries, i.e. Brunei Darussalam and Germany.

Aim: The information provided by the participants will help to investigate the functional coagulation behaviour in the long term by means of the detailed analysis of coagulation parameters using thromboelastometry during the acute stage of disease.

Methods: Blood samples were collected from patients with neuroinfectious diseases, particularly but not limited to dengue, to investigate the coagulation profiles using thromboelastometry and other standard tests.

Results: Interim analysis and preliminary analysis indicate that lab techniques under investigation such as ROTEM® analysis reveal high abnormalities in thrombocyte function. These preliminary results indicate that thromboelastograms and laboratory techniques might be of high clinical impact in such devastating diseases.

Conclusion: Neuroinfections are highly important – infectious of the brain and meninges may cause severe disability in patients of any age. Increasingly, comparable to stroke, in neuroinfectious disease the gold standard for survival is rapid diagnosis as basis for rapid treatment. Therefore: **Time is brain.**

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