PROLONGED FEBRILE ILLNESS CAUSED BY SICILIAN VIRUS INFECTION IN PORTUGAL

António Bento Guerra¹, Catarina Gouveia¹, Líbia Zé-Zé², Fátima Amaro², Gonçalo Cordeiro Ferreira¹, Maria João Brito¹

¹ Pediatric Infectious Diseases Unit, Women, Child and Adolescents Department, Hospital de Dona Estefânia CHLC – EPE. Lisbon. Portugal

² Nacional Institute of Health Dr. Ricardo Jorge, Centre for Vectors and Infectious Diseases Research, Águas de Moura, Portugal

INTRODUCTION

Sandfly Fever Sicilian Virus (SFSV) is classified within the *Phlebovirus* genus of the Phenuiviridae family. The infection is usually seen in summer months, especially in the Mediterranean area, and causes a self-limited benign disease. The only reference to this virus concerning humans in our country was made in 1974 and was regarding antibody detection in a seroprevalence study. Since then, there are no other reports.

Plebotomus papatasi

Plebotomus perniciosus

CASE PRESENTATION

8-year-old boy
Previously healthy

Fever (39°-38°) for a month
Malaise
Mild headache
Weight loss (6%)

Skin pallor
Hepatosplenomegaly (4 cm)
Oral mucosa aphotic ulcers
(D3 to D7)

Owens a dog
Travel to Ribatejo
(Portugal)
Week before

Scaling hands and feet
(D15 to D20)

WORKUP/ COMPLEMENTARY DIAGNOSTIC EXAMS

Microcytic anemia
Hb 9.2 x 10 g/L, MCV 74.7 fL
Leucocytes 6.8x10⁹/L, platelets 264 x10⁹/L
C-reactive protein 65,3 mg/L
Erythrocyte sedimentation rate 84 mm/h
Hypergammaglobulinemia 21800 g/dl
Antistreptolysin O titer: 664 UI/mL → 1120 UI/mL
Cardiologic evaluation: normal
Mouth ulcers : **HSV-1 PCR positive**
EBV, CMV, HIV negative; cultures negative

**IgM and IgG antibodies
for Sicilian virus positive**
Diagnosis confirmed by seroconversion

Blood SFSV molecular amplification – negative
Other causes for prolonged fever were
excluded

FOLLOW-UP

After hospital discharge he maintained asthenia and intermittent vespertine fever for one month, being clinically improved afterwards

Sandfly vector collection was performed at Ribatejo, but the two trapped specimens were negative for Phlebovirus RNA

COMMENTS

Although in Portugal sandflies (*Phlebotomus perniciosus*, *P. papatasi*, *P. ariasi*, *P. sergenti* and *Sergentomyia minuta*) and Toscana virus CSF infections were earlier identified, **SFSV has never been linked to symptomatic infections**

Sandfly fever known as the three days fever may cause prolonged fever and asthenia and complete recovery may last up to 30 days

In our case we cannot exclude that other co-infections might have had a role.

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e-mail address: a.bentoguerra@gmail.com