Challenges in the assessment of post extubation neurological status in an ICU: case report of a major burn patient

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Introduction:

The recovery of neurological status and mood following a major burn is slow and variable. Usually changes are transient and due to the injuries and medication to which the patient was exposed.

Case Report:

Medical history:

- 33 weeks premature, sepsis with respiratory distress syndrome requiring hospitalization at 1 month of age
- Possible cognitive deficit

Discussion:

Due to the difficulty in defining the diagnostic criteria, the non-convulsive status epilepticus (NCSE) is an entity difficult to identify, determine prevalence and outcome.

Although the evidence on this subject is scarce and almost all obtained in the adult population, we know that it is associated with some risk factors, such as trauma, infection, acute neurological injuries and patients admitted to intensive care units.

It is probably underdiagnosed, specially in children, and does not have as benign evolution as previously thought.

Early treatment seems important for recovery and to prevent long-term sequelae.

Conclusion:

Assessment of the neurological status of a patient after 45 days of sedation, who was in shock with multiorgan dysfunction and with a history of possible cognitive deficit is a challenge.

This case report draws our attention to the existence of NCSE and to the high level of suspicion needed for diagnosis.