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A CASE OF SUBACUTE SCLEROSING PANENCEPHALITIS THAT BEGAN BEFORE TWO YEARS OF AGE

M. Ugras, O. Aydin, C. Yakinci, N.O. Kutlu
Department of Pediatrics, Turgut Ozal Medical Center, Malatya, Turkey
meltemkorkut@yahoo.com

Subacute sclerosing panencephalitis (SSPE) is subacute, inflamatory and degenerative disease of brain caused by a slow virus infection. The diagnosis is made according to clinical criteria and elevated measles antibody titers in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). SSPE is generally seen after 5-10 years among children having primary measles infection younger than 2 years-of-age. Presentation before 2 years-of-age is very rare. The present case is the 4th SSPE case seen before 2 years-of-age, according to the literature.

A 20-month-old boy was admitted to Turgut Ozal Medical Center for progressive generalized myoclonies, difficulty in talking and walking. The patient had normal physical and neurological development untill the last two weeks. His mother had measles infection 10 days before delivery and the patient had measles infection on his 20th day of life. The patient was vaccinated for measles at 9 months-of-age.

Physical examination revealed generalized myoclonies, difficulty in walking and talking and elevated deep tendon reflexes. “Burst supression” pattern was seen on diazem EEG. Cranial MR images revealed elevated signals in periventricular white matter on T2 weighed images. IgG antibodies to measles virus was positive at 1/1280 titer in CSF where measles spesific oligoclonal band was also positive. Beta interferon and isoprinosine therapy was given.

Although SSPE is known to have a slow progression and the reported three patients younger than 2 years-of-age had a rapid progression and all have died, the present case is under control for six months and has no clinical deterioration till that time.