Global Science Research Journals

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Commentary | Open Access

Medical Case Studies and Case Reports

Vol. 11 (3). pp. 5-6 December, 2022

Identification and classification of Group A Streptococcal (GAS) infections

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Received: 21-Nov-2022, Manuscript No. MCSCR-22-83857; **Editorial assigned:** 24-Nov-2022, Pre QC No. MCSCR-22-83857 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 08-Dec-2022, QC No. MCSCR-22-83857; **Revised:** 16-Dec-2022, Manuscript No. MCSCR-22-83857 (R); **Published:** 22-Dec-2022, DOI: 10.15651/MCSCR.22.11.044.

DESCRIPTION

Numerous illnesses in humans are brought on by infection with *Streptococcus pyogenes*, a beta-hemolytic bacterium that is a member of Lancefield serogroup A and is also referred to as the Group A *Streptococci* (GAS). The bacteria that cause Group A Streptococcal (GAS) infections enter the body through the skin or throat and cause sickness. Most GAS infections result in relatively minor conditions like strep throat and impetigo. However, these bacteria can occasionally produce much more serious illnesses, even fatal ones, including Streptococcal Toxic Shock Syndrome (STSS) and necrotizing fasciitis, which are sometimes referred to as "the flesh-eating bacteria." Furthermore, people who carry group A streptococci may not show any symptoms of illness. It spreads quickly and is contagious. Group A streptococcal infections are treated with antibiotics.

According to Lancefield's initial classification, the antigenic variations in group-specific polysaccharides found in the bacterial cell wall allow beta-hemolytic *streptococci* to be separated into a variety of groups. Over 20 serologic groups have been identified and assigned letters (e.g., A, B, C). Group B streptococci, which are the most frequent causes of newborn sepsis and bacteremia among the non-group A streptococci, are the most significant human pathogens. However, other types, particularly group G, have occasionally been linked to pharyngitis.

Depending on the infection that the group A *streptococcus* bacteria causes, the symptoms can vary in severity. Small red patches on top of the patient's mouth (petechiae), a sore throat, stomach pain, swollen tonsils, or enlarged lymph nodes are some of the mild signs of group A streptococcal infection.

Group A streptococcal infection symptoms that affect the skin include a rash on the neck, underarms, or groynes; small, reddish-purple sores on the nose, mouth, arms, and legs; itchy skin; lesions that leak clear yellow fluid or pus; and sores that develop crusty yellow scabs on top of them. Extreme signs of group A streptococcal infection include Diarrhea, disorientation, fever, huge wounds, blisters or black spots growing on your skin, nausea or vomiting, excruciating pain that extends beyond the wound, skin that changes colour (from red to purple), swells (puffs up), or warm to touch are all symptoms of a streptococcal infection.

CLASSIFICATION

Various infections can be brought on by bacteria known as group A streptococcus (group A strep). These infections can cause everything from minor illnesses to extremely dangerous and lethal diseases. Strep throat, cellulitis, scarlet fever, streptococcal toxic shock syndrome, impetigo, rheumatic fever, necrotizing fasciitis, and post-streptococcal glomerulonephritis are a few of these illnesses.

Strep Throat

A fever and a painful throat are typically the symptoms of strep throat, the most typical group of a strep infection. The prevalence of strep throat is highest in school-aged children and teenagers.

Skin Infections

Cellulitis and impetigo (itchy, red, oozing sores) are two skin illnesses that can be caused by group A strep germs (red, swollen, painful skin).

Scarlet Fever

This is an ailment that can also be brought on by strep bacteria. This infection, which is brought on by a toxin the bacteria release into the body, is basically strep throat with a rash.

Necrotizing Fasciitis

Although it's uncommon, group A strep germs frequently cause necrotizing fasciitis, a deadly infection. It's a serious streptococcal infection that quickly kills tissue. It is occasionally referred to as "the flesh-eating illness." More vulnerable groups include young children and people with long-term illnesses like diabetes and kidney failure.

Streptococcal Toxic Shock Syndrome (STSS)

Another uncommon infection brought on by group A *strep* bacteria is STSS. When a toxin produced by the bacterium enters the body, a major illness develops. A dangerous drop in blood pressure, a rise in heart rate, and rapid breathing are indications of STSS.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Depending on the type of infection, the diagnosis must be made. Doctor will first assess patient's symptoms and then perform a physical examination. They'll ask certain questions about symptoms, including the severity and duration. Doctor will suggest certain tests to confirm the diagnosis, including: a blood test to find for an infection; a rapid test or culture test that swabs the throat and finds for bacteria under a microscope; a tissue sample to find an infection in a biopsy; and an imaging test like an MRI, CT scan, or ultrasound to look at the damage underneath the skin caused by an infection.

Antibiotics that are accessible and affordable can be used to treat group A *Streptococcus* bacteria. The preferred medication for both mild and severe illnesses is penicillin. Erythromycin can be used for penicillin-allergic patients who are only mildly ill, though occasionally resistance has been observed. Clindamycin can be added to the treatment in cases of necrotizing fasciitis or STSS, and it can be used to treat penicillin-allergic patients with more severe sickness. A few additional antibiotics are also efficient. With severe illnesses, supportive treatment in an intensive care unit and perhaps surgery are required in addition to antibiotics. Early intervention may lower the chance of death, but sadly, even effective treatment cannot always avert it.