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Ping Gong, MD
Thomas Jefferson University

Jerald Z. Gong, MD
Thomas Jefferson University

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Aplastic Anemia Post Liver Transplant Due to Graft-versus-host Disease
Ping Gong, MD PhD and Jerald Gong, MD
Department of Pathology, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, PA

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION:
The patient was a 64-year-old male presented with a 2 day history of increasing fevers and altered mental status. He underwent orthotopic liver transplant for cryptogenic cirrhosis, probably secondary to non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, 46 days before. The head and neck imaging showed negative changes. CBC at admission showed pancytopenia with WBC 8.6 x 10^9/L, hemoglobin 6.8 g/dl and platelet 29 x 10^9/L. "but is usually ineffective."

IMMUNOSUPPRESSION AND BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT, CYTES IN PB AND BM. THE TREATMENT INCLUDES THE PRESENCE OF BOTH DONOR AND RECIPIENT LYMPHOCYTES, WHICH IS DEMONSTRATED CHIMERISM WITH THE PRESENCE OF BOTH LIVER DONOR AND RECIPIENT LYMPHOCYTES, WHICH IS DIAGNOSTIC FOR GRAFT-VERSUS-host DISEASE (GVHD). NO THIRD HLAA TYPING PRESENT RULED OUT TRANSFUSION-ASSOCIATED GVHD. THE BIOSPY OF SKIN RASH ON LEFT ARM SHOWED VACUOLAR INTERFACE DERMATITIS WITH INCREASED T CELLS INFILTRATING THE BONE MARROW.

METHOD:
Bone marrow biopsy demonstrated marked hypocellular marrow. Bone marrow culture showed no acid fast bacteria or fungal growing. EBV in-situ hybridization, CMV immunohistochemical (IHC) stain, Grocott’s methenamine silver stain and Ziehl–Neelsen stain on bone marrow showed no acid fast bacteria or fungal growing. Hypocellular marrow. Bone marrow biopsy demonstrated marked chimerism with the presence of both liver donor and recipient lymphocytes, which is diagnostic for graft-versus-host disease (GVHD). No third HLA typing present ruled out transfusion-associated GVHD. The biopsy of skin rash on left arm showed vacuolar interface dermatitis with increased T cells infiltrating the bone marrow.

CONCLUSION

The differential diagnosis of aplastic anemia post liver transplant include: anaplastic anemia associated with non-A, non-B, non-C fulminant hepatic failure, medication, viral infection including parvovirus B19, CMV and EBV, post transplant lymphoproliferative disease, GVHD and other etiology such as iron deficiency, renal insufficiency, hypersplenism, hemolysis. The incidence of GVHD post liver transplant is ~1% and the mortality is 75-90%. The presentation includes fever, skin rash, diarrhea and pancytopenia. The diagnosis is demonstration of chimerism with the presence of both donor and recipient lymphocytes in PB and BM. The treatment includes immunosuppression and bone marrow transplant, but is usually ineffective.

Figures:

- Figure 1: Peripheral blood smear shows severe pancytopenia
- Figure 2: Bone marrow aspirate and biopsy. Bone marrow aspirate (A, 200X magnification and B, 400X magnification) shows hypocellular spicules in bone marrow composed mostly by stromal cells. Bone marrow biopsy (C, 200X magnification and D, 400X magnification) shows severe hypocellular (variable, 1-10% cellularity) bone marrow with trilineage maturation.
- Figure 3: Immunochemical staining for CD3 (A) and CD20 (B) demonstrate increased T cells infiltrating the bone marrow.
- Figure 4: Immunochemical staining for CMV (A), in-situ hybridization for EBER (B), special stains for AFB (C) and GMS (D) show no infectious process involving the bone marrow.
- Table 1: Patient's buccal mucosa, transplant liver, and patient's current bone marrow HLA typing.

CLINICAL COURSE

The patient is a 64-year-old male presented with a 2 day history of increasing fevers and altered mental status. His past medical history includes orthotopic liver transplant for cryptogenic cirrhosis, probably secondary to non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, 46 days ago. The clinical course was uneventful after the liver transplantation. He was found to be C. difficile positive and was put on appropriate antibiotics. He still spikes every night, up to 102 F; accompanied with tremors and decreased mental status. His liver function test is close to the normal range. CBC shows pancytopenia with WBC 0.6 x 10^9/L, Hb 6.8 g/dl, MCV 82 fL, reticulocytes 0.3%, platelet 29 x 10^9/L.

FINAL DIAGNOSIS

Liver transplant-associated GVHD

DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSES

- Transfusion-associated GVHD
- Viral infection (Parvovirus B19, CMV, EBV)
- Medications (Tacrolimus, cyclosporine A, Sirolimus, MMF, Azathioprine)
- Aplastic anemia (non-A, non-B, non-C fulminant hepatitis due to unknown viral infection)
- Hemolysis following ABO-incompatible liver transplant
- Hypersplenism
- PTLD: 2% of liver transplant; poor prognosis
- Renal insufficiency: drug effect, diabetes, HTN

RISK FACTORS FOR GVHD AFTER LIVER TRANSPLANTATION

- Close HLA matching as a significant risk factor for GVHD
- Multiple HLA class I mismatches protect against GVHD
- More frequent in older patients (age >65 years) with younger donors (age difference of >40 years)

TREATMENT OF GVHD

- Increased immunosuppression with high-dose steroids and antibody preparations such as antithymocyte globulin, antilymphocyte globulin and Previdimole
- Broad antibiotic and antifungal prophylaxis
- Restoration of the host’s immune system.

REFERENCES