



Hydrocephalus in cases of Tuberculous Meningitis

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Tuberculosis meningitis (TBM) is a serious public health problem in developing countries as it leads to significant mortality and residual neurological sequelae. The estimated mortality due to TBM in Asia is 1.5 per 100,000 populations. **Objectives:** To determine the frequency of hydrocephalus in cases of TBM presenting to the Department of Medicine and Pulmonology, Sheikh Zayed Hospital, Rahim Yar Khan. **Material & methods:** This was a cross sectional study conducted during May 2016 to February 2017 conducted at Department of Medicine & Pulmonology, Sheikh Zayed Hospital, Rahim Yar Khan. The detailed demographic data was collected. Cases fulfilling the criteria of TBM underwent CT scan of brain (with IV contrast) for confirmation of TBM at the Department of Radiology, Sheikh Zayed hospital Rahim Yar Khan. **Results:** In this study there were 186 cases, out of which 108 were males and 78 females with mean of 35.29 ± 11.17 years. Hydrocephalus was seen in 122 (65.59%) cases. It was seen significantly higher in male group where it caused it in 80 out of 108 males (74.1%) with p value of 0.04. In context of age groups with respect to hydrocephalus it was seen maximum in patients with age group of 31 to 40 years affecting 24 (80%) out of 30 of its respective group. with p value of 0.24. Hydrocephalus was observed maximum in stage I of TBM where it affected 1 out of 5 cases followed by stage II with 36 of 52 cases with p= 0.44. **Conclusion;** Hydrocephalus is an important and deadly complication of tuberculous meningitis and was noted in 65.59% cases. There is significant association of male gender with hydrocephalus.

Key words: Tuberculosis, Meningitis, Hydrocephalus.

INTRODUCTION

Tuberculosis (TB) is a formidable disease worldwide. This is of high concern due to its highly infectious nature especially in the form of respiratory involvement. The increasing prevalence of TB in under developed and their re-emergence in developed countries due to rising counts of HIV in recent years makes this disease a topic of universal concern. Pakistan has

an incidence rate of 275/100000 population¹.

Tuberculosis is mainly the disease of lungs but it can involve any part of the body including brain and TB meningitis (TBM) is one of its salient entities. TBM is a highly devastating form, which even in the setting of appropriate anti tuberculous therapy (ATT), leads to unacceptable levels of morbidity and mortality.

Despite the development of promising molecular diagnostic techniques, the diagnosis of TBM relies largely on microbiological methods that consist of Acid Fast Bacilli (AFB) smear on cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) or CSF culture for AFB, both of which are relatively insensitive, and pose a diagnostic challenge. That is the reason why TBM is diagnosed late and result in serious complications.

TBM can present with complaints of fever, weight loss, photophobia, headache, vomiting, cranial nerve palsies and altered level of consciousness that can be classified on the basis of British Medical Research Council contemporary clinical criteria (BMRC) for TBM into three stages². Furthermore, TBM can complicate into seizure disorder, hydrocephalus, hearing loss, tuberculous radiculomyelitis (rare) with different degree of preponderance. The rate of hydrocephalus in TBM varied from 20%³ to 65%⁴ in countries where TB prevalence is high.

In a study conducted in PIMS hospital, Rawalpindi on 100 patients of TBM. Majority of the patients presented in BMRC stage I and II and revealed hydrocephalus in 58% of the cases⁵.

In another study at Karachi on 93 TBM patients, whose maximum number of patients presented in stage II of BMRC, hydrocephalus was seen in 60% of cases overall and in 72.3% patients in their respective BMRC stage II⁶. Moreover in a study from India on 45 cases of TBM revealed hydrocephalus in 33.3 % of cases only⁷.

The authors present data on the frequency of hydrocephalus in cases of TBM presenting to the Department of Medicine, Sheikh Zayed Hospital, Rahim Yar Khan

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This was a cross sectional study conducted during May 2016 to February 2017. This was conducted at Department of Medicine, Sheikh Zayed Hospital, Rahim Yar Khan. The detailed demographic data like age, gender, and weight were collected. An informed consent to be included in the study was taken from the patients who were conscious and their next of kin in case of unconsciousness. Every patient fulfilling the criteria of TBM underwent CT scan of brain (with IV contrast) within two days after confirmation of TBM at the Department of Radiology, Sheikh Zayed hospital Rahim Yar Khan and was reported by consultant radiologist. The hydrocephalus was labeled according to the operational definition.

Inclusion Criteria:

All adults 15-50 years of age of either sex who were diagnosed case of Tuberculosis Meningitis were included in this study.

Exclusion Criteria:

- 1- Age less than 15 years or more than 50 years.
- 2- Meningitis other than TBM or Culture positive for any other organism other than Mycobacterium Tuberculosis.
- 3- Diagnosed case of brain tumor or cyst of any type or size.
- 4- History of head trauma in last 1 year.
- 5- Bleeding disorder or platelet count <50,000.

Tuberculous Meningitis (TBM):

Presence of any two or more of the clinical features lasting for any duration of time along with any of the positive laboratory data were labeled as TBM.

Clinical features:

1. Fever more than 99°F occurring about at least 6 hours/ 24 hour for more than two weeks
2. Headache dull in nature persisting for at least 3 hours per day for 7 consecutive days
3. Vomiting of any amount at least 3 times per day for 3 consecutive days
4. History of contact with TB patient in family (living in same house) in last 2 years

Laboratory data:

- a) Positive AFB smear on CSF (This was labeled positive when isolating any Acid Fast Bacilli (AFB) on florescence staining of the CSF at the laboratory of Sheikh Zayed Hospital. Rahim Yar Khan)
- b) Positive AFB culture on CSF (It was labeled when the Mycobacterium Tuberculosis was isolated after their growth on Bactec® media used for culture and assessed at 4 to 6 weeks.
- c) Typical CSF picture of lymphocytic pleocytosis (20 – 500 lymphocyte per cubic mm) with increased CSF protein (more than 100 mg/dl) and decreased CSF glucose concentration (less than 60% of corresponding plasma level checked at same time as CSF examined).

BMRC contemporary clinical criteria for TBM:

It was divided into 3 stages.

Stage I: Alert and oriented without focal neurological deficits and GCS is 15/15.

Stage II: Glasgow coma score of 11-14 or 15 with focal neurological deficits.

Stage III: Glasgow coma score of 10 or less, with or without focal neurological deficits.

Hydrocephalus; It was labeled as yes where there was dilatation of any ventricle in the brain (3rd, 4th or lateral ventricle), when dilated more than 25% of their normal value diagnosed on CT brain (plain) by radiologist.

Statistical analysis

Data was analyzed with the help of SPSS version 21. Quantitative variables like age and weight were presented in terms of mean \pm SD (Standard Deviation). Frequency & percentages were calculated for gender, age groups, stage of TBM and outcome variable i.e. hydrocephalus detected (yes or not). Effect modifiers will be controlled through stratification and post stratification Chi-Square test was applied with P-value < 0.05 as significant.

RESULTS

In this study there were 186 cases, out of which 108 were males and 78 females with mean of 35.29 ± 11.17 years. Hydrocephalus was seen in 122 (65.59%) out of 186 cases of TBM. It was seen significantly higher in male group where it caused it in 80 out of 108 males (74.1%) with p value of 0.04 (table 1). In context of age groups with respect to hydrocephalus it was seen maximum in patients with age group of 31 to 40 years affecting 24 (80%) out of 30 of its respective group. It was followed by 41 to 50 years affecting 56 (68.3%) of 82 cases, though this difference was not found statistically significant with p value of 0.24 as in Table 2. Hydrocephalus was observed maximum in stage I of TBM where it affected 1 out of 5 cases followed by stage II with 36 of 52 cases and then stage III with 21 of 35 patients. This difference was also not significant with $p = 0.44$ (table 3).

Gender	Hydrocephalus		Total
	Yes	No	
Male	80 (74.1%)	28 (25.9%)	108
Female	42 (53.8%)	36 (46.2%)	78
Total	122 (65.6%)	64 (34.4%)	186

Table 1: Gender distribution of hydrocephalus.

Age Group	Hydrocephalus		Total
	Yes	No	
15-30	42 (56.8%)	32 (43.2%)	74
31-40	24 (80.0%)	06 (20.0%)	30
41-50	56 (68.3%)	26 (31.7%)	82
Total	122 (65.6%)	64 (34.4%)	186

Table 2: Age distribution of hydrocephalus.

Stage of TBM	Hydrocephalus		Total
	Yes	No	
I	08 (80.0%)	02 (20.0%)	10
II	72 (69.2%)	32 (30.8%)	104
III	42 (58.3%)	30 (41.7%)	72
Total	122 (65.6%)	64 (34.4%)	186

Table 3 Hydrocephalus in different stages of TBM (Tubercular Meningitis)

DISCUSSION

Tuberculosis meningitis (TBM) is a serious public health problem in developing countries as it leads to significant mortality and residual neurological sequel. The estimated mortality due to TBM in Asia is 1.5 per 100,000 populations.

Hydrocephalus was seen in 122 (65.59%) out of 186 cases of TBM in this study. Similar percentages were seen in a study by Nabi S et al and Thwaites GE et al who had it in around 60% of the cases.⁹⁻¹⁰ However lower percentages were seen in a study conducted by Chan et al who found it in 29% of the cases.¹¹ Why is this hydrocephalus found higher in our study as compared to the ones with lower percentages, it might be the cut off value used in this study, which was quite on the lower side, that's why it reflected in a very higher number. And the other studies with similar percentages also had lower threshold to label it.

Hydrocephalus was seen significantly higher in male group where it caused it in 80 out of 108 males (74.1%) with p value of 0.04. A higher percentage of males were seen in other studies by Kumar R and Christensen AS et al but they did not find any significant association.¹²⁻¹³ Why this was higher in our study, this might be because the males presented maximum in stage II of TBM, which was the groups who showed maximum hydrocephalus in this study where out of 104 cases 72 were males.

In context of age groups with respect to hydrocephalus it was seen maximum in patients with age group of 31 to 40 years affecting 24 (80%) out of 30 of its respective group. It was followed by 41 to 50 years affecting 56 (68.3%) of 82 cases, though this difference was not found statistically significant with p value of 0.24. Similar higher percentages were seen in other studies by Hoşoğlu S, Anderson NE and Molavi et al.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ But they used slight different age groups like 25 to 40 years where higher number of TBM was found. Why this age group was found more vulnerable to disease is not known.

Hydrocephalus was observed maximum number in stage II with 72 out of 104 cases and then stage III with 42 of 70 patients. This difference was also not significant with $p = 0.44$. This was similar to a study by Chan et al who found maximum cases in stage II and III affecting 89% of the cases combined.⁷⁵ Similar patterns were also noted by study done by Salekeen S and Newton RW who also did not find any significant association.¹⁷⁻¹⁸ This reinsures our

belief that higher the disease process and higher is the chances to develop hydrocephalus

CONCLUSION

Tubercular meningitis is a serious public health hazard especially in our country. The disease is associated with a high percentage of hydrocephalus with male preponderance.

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