Letter to the Editor

A rare case of pyopneumothorax
Um caso raro de piopneumotórax

To the Editor:

Microorganisms of the genus Gemella are facultative anaerobic, catalase-negative, Gram-positive cocci that are similar to Streptococcus viridans. These commensal bacteria of the oropharynx and upper airway rarely cause infections in humans. However, reports of infectious processes in different locations have been increasing in number. The species G. morbillorum and G. haemolysans are the most common pathogenic species, typically causing meningitis and endocarditis. Although the pulmonary infections caused by these bacteria are rare, they can cause lung abscesses, necrotizing pneumonia, and pleural empyema.

In a review conducted in 2008, only two cases of empyema due to G. haemolysans were identified, and both of the patients involved had presented with a history of carcinoma. The predisposing factors for G. haemolysans infection include poor oral hygiene and previous dental manipulation, which, due to injury to the oral mucosa, can facilitate the hematogenous dissemination of the microorganism, as well as microaspiration of oropharyngeal contents, which can facilitate bronchogenic dissemination. There is limited information regarding the sensitivity of these microorganisms to antibiotics; they are commonly sensitive to beta-lactam antibiotics and aminoglycosides, although cases of resistance have been described. Regarding...
the duration of the treatment, a period of at least four weeks—or until the empyema has been completely drained—is recommended. Although *G. haemolysans* infection is a rare condition, it should be considered in immunocompromised patients or in those who have recently undergone dental procedures or gastrointestinal manipulation.

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References