REPORT OF IMPORTED CASES OF LOA LOA IN VENEZUELA

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Five imported cases of filariasis are reported in this communication, two with L. loa and three cases mixed with M. perstans, same being the first cases of this illness reported in Venezuela.

Five male patients, aged 31 to 42 years, coming from the Republic of Equatorial Guinea (Central Africa), visited the physician complaining of non quantified fever and chills within three days to their arrival to Venezuela. Antecedents show that three of the patients referred treated malaria, type and date unknown. Four of them up to three frames of L. loa filariasis in the past five years, treated with Dietilcarbamazine (DEC), treating scheme unknown. Since three months ago, three of them refer pruritus, arthralgia and frequent headaches. They deny other antecedents of importance. At the physical examination Calabar swelling in the hand was observed in two of them. There was no evidence of ocular damage. Remainer of the physical examination showed no other abnormalities.

Samples of peripheral blood were taken between 10:00 and 16:00 h, performing extensive colors with Giemsa at 10% for 20-30 min, reporting Plasmodium falciparum and L. loa microfilarias in three patients, and L. loa microfilarias and M. perstans in two patients. L. loa microfilarias was about 250 to 300 μm long and 6 to 8 μm wide, sheathed, with a conspicuous cephalic space followed by a few comparatively large granules arranged irregularly and with a slender tail, composed of a column of unevenly spaced several elongated nuclei. M. perstans microfilarias measure 190-200 μm by 4 μm, are unsheathed. The tail tapers to a bluntly rounded end and nuclei extend to the end of the tail.

Patients with P. falciparum were treated with just one dose of 1500 mg of Sulfadoxina and 75 mg of Pirimetamina, complemented with 45 mg of Primaquina base substance, giving evidence of parasitological negativity in later control.

Subsequently, the microfilaremia was quantified, finding up to 30 L. loa microfilarias per 20 μl. In the mixed cases, relation between L. loa and M. perstans was 25/8 per 20 μl. Routine hematological tests showed between 8-30% of eosinofilia. Urine test showed no alterations.

Patients with L. loa microfilarias were treated with a DEC dose of 2.3 mg/kg during 21 days. Patients with mixed microfilaria were treated with an Ivermectin dose of 200 mg/kg/kg, just one dose. Twenty five days after treatment, there was a reduction of 70% of L. loa microfilarias and 80% of mixed microfilarias. There was evidence of 6-17% of eosinofilia, remainder of the hematological test showed no other abnormalities. Fifty days after treatment there was evidence of parasitological negativity in both treatments. They did not refer allergic or adverse reactions of any kind during said treatments.

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