

RENAL AND CUTANEOUS ANCA VASCULITIS WITH MILD CARDIAC COMPLAINTS: BE AWARE TO COCAINE-LEVAMISOLE ABUSE EVEN THOUGH PATIENT DENIES

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Introduction: The literature abundantly describes that inhaled cocaine abuse can cause nasal midline perforation which can be of difficult differential diagnosis with Wegener's granulomatosis lesions. However, few are the cases of association with the inhaled use of cocaine and cardiovascular complaints, associated with skin lesions, intravascular thrombosis, neutropenia, and renal involvement.

Methods: We describe a series of five cases (2016-2017) in a University Hospital of a regional reference in southern Brazil. All denied use of illicit drugs at admission. We confirmed the use of cocaine adulterated by levamisole.

Results: Five patients (3 men and 2 women, aged 21 to 65 years), with complaints of weakness, precordial pain, palpitations, dyspnoea. Upon physical examination, they presented hypertension, pallor, skin lesions (erythema multiforme, petechiae, ulcers) (Fig 1). One patient required cardioscintigraphy to exclude angina. Renal manifestations in 80, biopsy with pauci-immune crescentic glomerulonephritis (Fig.2). Cutaneous manifestations in 80, 1 / g cocaine). In addition to death (rapid onset due to mesenteric vasculitis, intestinal necrosis, and sepsis), one patient developed CKD and another patient remained with neuromuscular proteinuria. Two patients recovered renal function.

Discussion: Levamisole was used in humans as an immunomodulatory agent in oncology, until its removal due to adverse effects. It remains approved as an anthelmintic for veterinary use. For their clinical and organoleptic characteristics, has been used as cocaine adulterant in the Americas, Europe, and Oceania. It produces adverse effects such as malaise, fatigue and arthralgia, pulmonary hemorrhage, renal failure, seizures, skin necrosis (haemorrhagic blisters), retiniform purpura, haematological changes (neutropenia, leukopenia, agranulocytosis), hyponatremia, positive serology for ANA, PR3, ANCA, DNAs, lupus anticoagulant and anti-human elastase (Lee et al, 2012). The combination of agents should be suspected in the presence of ANCA(+) vasculitis. Urinary toxicology screening for cocaine is necessary for diagnosis and follow-up of abstinence.

Conclusion: Death and terminal CKD can occur in vasculitis induced by cocaine adulterated by levamisole. During the clinical-laboratory investigation, the physician should be alert to information about the use of illicit drugs often neglected by patients.