

A NEPHROTIC SYNDROME REVEALING KARTAGENER'S SYNDROME COMPLICATED BY RENAL AMYLOIDOSIS

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ABSTRACT

Kartagener's syndrome is a group of primary ciliary dyskinesia associating *situs inversus totalis*, bronchiectasis and recurrent chronic sinusitis. It's secondary to structural and functional ciliary abnormalities leading to impaired mucociliary clearance. It's a rare genetic disorder transmitted in autosomal recessive mode (Prevalence 1/10000 to 1/20000). We report a case of a 54 year-old-woman who was admitted for a nephrotic syndrome. Investigations revealed a Kartagener's syndrome complicated by a renal amyloidosis. It's a rare complication of Kartagener's syndrome resulting probably from bronchiectasis and chronic respiratory infections.

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INTRODUCTION

Case report

A 54 year-old-woman was admitted in nephrology for a nephrotic syndrome. Her parents were first degree relatives. She was treated for high blood pressure, diabetes and gastric ulcer from several years. Since childhood, she had chronic cough, abundant bronchorrhea and recurrent episodes of respiratory tract infections. She was followed for asthma and was treated by bronchodilator therapy. Physical examination showed a normal blood pressure (110/70 mmHg), rhoncus and crackles at pulmonary auscultation and edema of lower extremities. Dipstick urinalysis showed proteinuria without hematuria. She had 6g/day in 24-hour urine analysis. Other Laboratory findings revealed a serum creatinin at 186 µmol/l, urea at 13.9 mmol/l, proteins at 42g/l, albumin at 17g/l, sodium at 136 mmol/l, potassium at 3,6mmol/l, corrected calcium at 101 mg/l. Hepatitis B and C and HIV serologies were negative. Complement levels C3 and C4 were normal. Serum protein electrophoresis was normal. Complete blood count revealed a microcytic anemia with hemoglobin rate at 10,9g/dl, normal red blood cells and platelets rate. Chest radiograph showed dextrocardia, right lung atelectasis with tracheal attraction (Fig.1). Computed tomography showed bronchiectasis, right lung destruction and complete transposition of mediastinal and abdominal organs which confirmed *situs inversus totalis*

(Fig.2a, b, c). She also had mucosal thickening of maxillary sinuses (Fig.2d). Renal biopsy was performed revealing renal amyloidosis (Fig.3).



Fig 1 Anteroposterior chest X-ray showing intercostal right space narrowing, tracheal attraction and dextrocardia.

Given these data, the diagnosis of Kartagener's syndrome was concluded. It was not possible to study ciliary function or carry out genetic tests confirming the diagnosis because these laboratory tests are not available in our laboratories.

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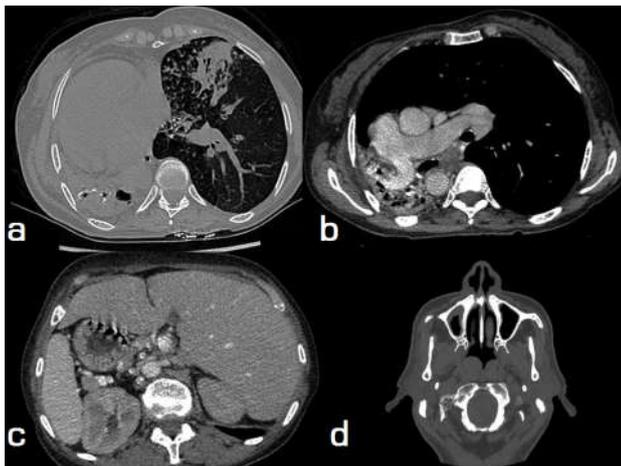


Fig.2 (a,b,c) High resolution computed tomography (HRCT) of the thorax showing *situs inversus totalis*, bronchiectasis with 'tree-in-bud' appearance in the upper left lobe suggestive of bronchiolitis, right lung atelectasis and bronchiectasis.

Fig.2 (d) HRCT showing a slight mucosal thickening of maxillary sinuses

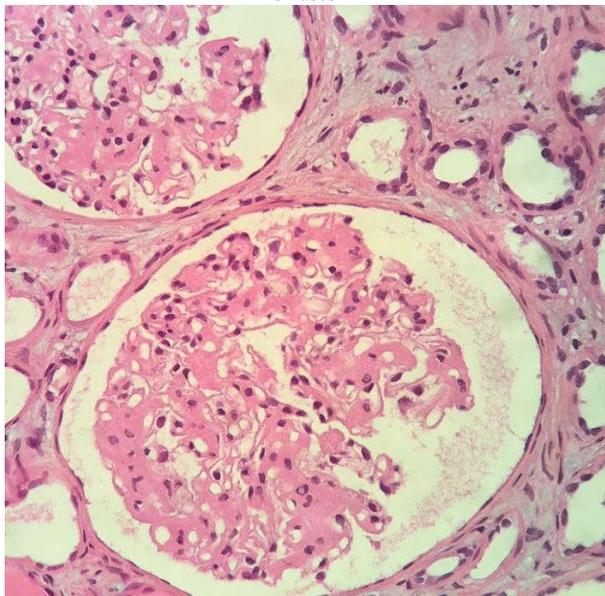


Fig 3 Pathological study of our patient renal biopsy showing congo red stained glomerular amyloid fibrils

Two months later, our patient was readmitted for digestive hemorrhage (hematemesis and melena). Oesophago-gastro-duodenoscopy was normal. Renal function has profoundly impaired and eventually, she progressed to end stage renal failure requiring hemodialysis.

DISCUSSION

Primary ciliary dyskinesia (PCD) is a rare recessive autosomal disease (Prevalence 1/10000 to 1/20000), characterized by ultrastructural and functional abnormalities of respiratory cilia, leading to impaired mucociliary motility and then abnormal ciliary clearance. Kartagener's syndrome is a form of PCD which associates *situs inversus totalis* (50% of PCD) [1,2].

PCD is primarily responsible for respiratory symptoms including upper and lower respiratory tract infections and recurrent rhinosinusitis progressing to bronchiectasis and sinonasal polyposis. However, other extrapulmonary symptoms and abnormalities can be encountered. Indeed, most affected male individuals have sterility due to immobility of

spermatozoa, while women have a high risk of extrauterine pregnancies. In addition, cardiac malformations, ocular retinitis pigmentosa, chronic otitis media, conductive hearing loss, some cases of hydrocephalus and polycystic kidney disease have been described in association with PCD [1,3]. Diagnosis can be confirmed by performing genetic tests or by screening ciliary structure or function, while treatment is primarily supportive, mainly represented by respiratory kinesitherapy, to slow down the disease evolution [4].

AA amyloidosis is a rare complication of Kartagener's syndrome and is probably related to bronchiectasis. Four cases have been described in the literature. Three of them had a normal renal function [5-7] while the fourth has progressed to end stage renal failure such our patient [8]. Another case of chronic renal failure associated with Kartagener's syndrome have been reported, but its etiology is unknown because renal biopsy was not performed due to advanced renal failure [9]. Not only humans are concerned by this complication of Kartagener's syndrome. Bartolo reported a renal amyloidosis as a result of this syndrome in a dog [10].

Type AA of amyloidosis is certainly the form usually described in this pathology but it is not the only form presented in the literature. In fact, one case of transthyretin amyloidosis associated to Kartagener's syndrome has been reported [11]. Nephrotic syndrome in this pathology seems therefore to be essentially related to renal amyloidosis, however other renal disorders have been described: focal segmental glomerulosclerosis and mesangioproliferative glomerulonephritis [12,13].

CONCLUSION

Renal amyloidosis is a rare but serious complication of Kartagener's syndrome. It can rapidly progress to end stage renal failure. Early management is therefore necessary, hence the importance of earlier diagnosis. Even if treatment is essentially supportive, it can considerably halt the evolution to end stage renal failure. Therefore, we should be more vigilant about this diagnosis.

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