Cutaneous Anthrax Induced By AL-Hijama in A Patient with Type II Diabetes Mellitus

E. Niyogushima ,M. Alahyane ,S. Rafi ,G. El Mghari ,N. El Ansari
Department of Endocrinology Diabetology and Metabolic Diseases
Mohammed VI University Hospital - Marrakesh

Background:

Al Hijama or Cupping is a commonly practiced traditional therapy using a cup to pull the skin into traction, resulting in laceration of skin with blood flow.

We report a case of cutaneous anthrax after Al Hijama performed by a non-health care professional in a type II diabetic patient.

Case Report:

A 59 year old man with 2 years history of uncontrolled type II diabetes mellitus treated with insulin, presented a month after cupping therapy, acute local infection signs in posterior neck with purulent discharge and fever, associated with hyperglycemic ketosis decompensation of his diabetes. Ultrasonography revealed a subcutaneous collection measuring 7.3 × 6.7 cm, well limited, heterogeneous hypoechoic. Bacteriological study isolated Gram-positive cocci sensitive to methicillin.

Infection was treated successfully with surgical drainage, antibiotics and management of diabetic ketosis.

Discussion:

There are two types of cupping therapy: dry and wet. Our patient did non-invasive technique. The source of infection remains unknown. However, we cannot exclude possibility that dry cupping predisposes to skin infection. Pathogenicity of acute bacterial infections of skin structures in diabetic patients is complex and multifactorial. Chronic hyperglycemia leads to a failure of the immune system by a defect in the production of cytokines, inhibition of leukocyte recruitment, failure to recognize pathogens, dysfunction of the phagocytic and cytotoxic power of immune cells.

Conclusion:

Besides of its benefits, the risk of infection after Al-Hijamah, especially in Diabetic population, is higher. High hygiene standards must be respected to avoid complications.

Keywords:

Anthrax, Al-Hijama, diabetes mellitus.