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PARASSITOLOGIA

CASE REPORT: ASCARIS LUMBRICOIDES INFESTATION IN A CHILD

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INTRODUZIONE

Ascaris lumbricoides is one of the most well-known helminthic parasites affecting humans, and Ascariasis is associated to more than 1.2 billion infections globally. Ascariasis generally occurs through hand-to-mouth ingestion of agricultural products or food contaminated with parasite eggs. Poor sanitation and inadequate sewage disposal play a key role in the maintenance and propagation of Ascariasis.

METODI

A 1-year-old baby was admitted to the Academic Department of Pediatrics of the Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital because the patient's mother reported a history of cough, abdominal pain, malnutitrion and presence of worms in feces before coming to the hospital.
At the time of admission, clinical and laboratory investigations were done. The red blood cell count was 4.53 × 106/μL, and haemoglobin level was 12.2 g/dL. The total leukocyte count and eosinophils were normal and respectively 8.4 × 103/μL and 6.4%. Abdominal ultrasonography and X ray were negative. The worms were sent to the laboratory of parasitology for further identification.

RISULTATI

The worms were cylindrical in shape, pinkish in color. Adult male measured 20 cm in length and adult female measured 30 cm in length. These worms were identified as Ascaris lumbricoides at macroscopic observation, while size and shape of eggs were addressed microscopically. The IgG ELISA assay provided a high antibody titer. Three days post anti-helminthic drug, stool examination revealed few A. lumbricoides eggs; anti-helminthic drug was repeated twice after the first and second weeks post examination, hence the patient was discharged.

CONCLUSIONI

Patients presenting with A. lumbricoides are generally asymptomatic, or can present with nonspecific constitutional, pulmonary, and gastrointestinal symptoms. These complaints may represent an early disease or the onset of complications that may result from an infection due to A. lumbricoides. Early diagnosis and treatment can help limit the incidence of complications and infection severity. Improvement in education, sanitation conditions and health services are essential in raising the standards of health and prevention circulation of A. lumbricoides in populations at risk. With an early diagnosis of A. lumbricoides, patients may benefit experiencing shorter hospital stay as well as reduced complications.