Necrotizing colitis possibly induced by quetiapine

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BACKGROUND

Ischemic colitis is the most frequent vascular pathology of the digestive tube. It encompasses three subtypes depending on the severity of the necrotic lesions, from the non gangrenous form when only the mucosa is affected to the gangrenous form when all the layers are necrotic. A range of drugs like NSAIDs and cocaine are known to be related with cases of ischemic colitis. Necrotizing colitis due to neuroleptics is a rare affection and has been reported only a few times.

METHODS/CASE REPORT

We present the case of a 45-year-old woman addressed for acute abdominal pain from a psychiatric hospital where she was treated for personality disorders and psychotic ideas with quetiapine. The examination showed a tympanic abdominal dilation with diffuse pain on palpation. The laboratory tests indicated a CRP at 13 mg/l and a leukocytosis at 11.3 G/l and the plain abdominal radio showed a colonic dilatation of the ascending and transverse colon of 7 cm. A CT scan confirmed the diffuse dilatation of the colon without any sign of intestinal suffering or obstruction (Fig.1). Due to the intensity of abdominal pain and beginning signs of a septic shock, the patient underwent exploratory laparotomy. A complete necrotic colon from the cecum to the descendo-sigmoid junction with no signs of perforation or vascular thrombosis was found (Fig.2). A subtotal colectomy was performed with an end ileostomy.

RESULTS

The postoperative recovery was uneventful except from a slight pancreatitis due to parenteral nutrition and a thrombosis of the right internal jugular after a central venous catheter. Histopathology showed a near total necrosis of the colonic wall (Fig.3). Restoration of the bowel continuity was performed two months later.

DISCUSSION

Necrotizing colitis related to neuroleptics is rare and has only been reported in few reports. Symptoms such abdominal pain and constipation are not specific. Due to high risk of perforation an aggressive management is mandatory. However, in absence of pathognomonic histological criteria, the diagnosis of neuroleptics induced ischemic colitis remains speculative.

REFERENCES

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Figure 1. Diffuse dilatation of the colon

Figure 2. Aspect of the resected colon.

Figure 3. The mucosa, sub mucosa and part of the muscularis(A+B) have been replaced by necrotic tissue.