

A Rare Neurological Manifestation of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in a Single Reference

Center: Ramsay Hunt Syndrome

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INTRODUCTION

Ramsay Hunt Syndrome (RHS) is a rare form of herpes zoster caused by the reactivation of the dormant varicella-zoster virus (VZV) in the geniculate ganglion. The literature presents cases of COVID-19 associated with HZ, but to our knowledge; this is the first report of RHS associated with COVID-19 in a pediatric patient.

MATERIALS&METHODS

We retrieved the data files of 1008 pediatric patients diagnosed with COVID-19 and the initial specific neurological complications from March 2020 to March 2022. All the patients underwent PCR examination for COVID-19 and a detailed neurological examination.

RESULTS

The ages of patients were between 2 months -17,5 years old on admission. The male to female ratio was 1.26/1. The initial specific neurological manifestation of the patients comprised: RHS (n:1). A 13 -year-old girl was admitted to our department with Grade 2 left-sided peripheral facial palsy (PFP). She tested positive for SARS- Cov-2 without any general or respiratory symptoms on admission. In the following days, she developed zoster rash on the ipsilateral ear and auricular pain. The MRI showed Gd enhancement at the left facial nerve. Under antiviral and steroid treatment, the outcome was favorable with marked improvement at 2 months.

CONCLUSIONS

COVID-19 increases the risk for HZV infection, probably through induced depression of the cellular immunity. Our pediatric patient presented with RHS during the course of latent COVID-19 infection, firstly reported here. RHS can be the only presenting symptom of COVID-19. We recommend testing these patients even if there are no other manifestations.

REFERENCES

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