Post-Transfusion Purpura: A Rare Cause of Severe Thrombocytopenia.

Rachel Kinney DO  
Lehigh Valley Health Network; rachel.kinney@lvhn.org

Bala Carver MD  
Lehigh Valley Health Network; bala.carver@lvhn.org

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarlyworks.lvhn.org/medicine

Part of the Medical Sciences Commons

Published In/Presented At

Thrombocytopenia in hospitalized patients is a frequent occurrence with various etiologies. However, severe thrombocytopenia with a platelet count <15,000 is uncommon. Post-transfusion purpura (PTP) is a rare but potentially fatal cause of thrombocytopenia. Due to the rarity of PTP, it is often initially misdiagnosed, causing a delay in treatment.

CONCLUSIONS

Post-Transfusion Purpura: A Rare Cause of Severe Thrombocytopenia

METHODS

- A 59-year-old female with a history of Sjogren’s syndrome and rheumatoid arthritis presented with extensive petechia.
- Labwork revealed a platelet count of 10, decreased from 211 four days prior to admission.
- The patient was started on argatroban for suspected HIT in the setting of recent heparin use.

RESULTS

- After discovery of severe thrombocytopenia, the patient was started on argatroban for suspected heparin induced thrombocytopenia (HIT) in the setting of recent heparin use.
- A heparin-associated platelet antibody (HAPA) was negative, ruling out HIT. Argatroban was discontinued and a platelet transfusion was initiated.
- She developed 3 severe transfusion reactions that resolved with cessation of the transfusion.
- Ertapenem was discontinued to rule out drug-induced thrombocytopenia and an IgG level was within normal limits, excluding an immunoglobulin A (IgA) deficiency as the cause of repeated transfusion reactions.
- A peripheral smear showed decreased platelets but no evidence of schistocytes or spherocytes. An abdominal ultrasound showed no splenomegaly.
- Human platelet antigen-1a (HPA-1a) was positive and the diagnosis of PTP was made.
- The patient received intravenous immunoglobulin (IVig) and prednisone with rapid improvement in platelet count.

REFERENCES: