



INFECTIOUS DISEASES (BACTERIAL, FUNGAL, VIRAL, PARASITIC, INFESTATIONS)

POST HERPETIC NEURALGIA: HOW THE COMMUNITY RESPONDES PAIN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRY

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Background: Chicken pox prevalence is higher in developing country however there is still no routine vaccine against it. Herpes zoster pain and postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) particularly affect geriatric population.

Methods: This Observational-Study among geriatric patients having complications after herpes zoster infections. In-depth interview, tools like Initial Zoster Impact Questionnaire, EuroQoL-5Dimension and the Zoster-Brief Pain-Inventory, dermatological QoL.

Results: Among 98 geriatric patients (M: 46/F: 52) having herpes zoster pain, PHN were included with mean age of 63.5 and mean time since rash onset 17.4 days. Pain was being reported by up to 94% of patients. In the acute phase, pain was usually moderate or severe, with patients ranking HZ pain as more intense. 94.0% of patients experienced ZAP. Mean \pm SD worst pain-score decreased from 6.43 ± 3.09 at enrollment to 2.05 ± 1.98 at one month. Up to 39% of patients with HZ develop PHN, QoL in daily activity performance, emotional and physical functioning was impaired at first day and almost resolved by 2 months. Mean \pm SD EQ-5D score significantly decreased ($P < 0.001$). Patients complained of having insomnia (20%), feeling helpless and depressed (15%), limitation of movement (11%), and inability to continue work (12%). Those who were treated with topical steroid creams having rebound phenomenon.

Conclusion: HZ pain, and particularly PHN, have a major impact on physical, psychological, functional and social well-being of patients. Geriatric patients with workload having more pain sensation, impaired QoL in daily activity performance, emotional and physical functioning. The negative impact on QoL was more prevalent in patients with a longer PHN duration. Ophthalmic-zoster and pre-existing neurological disorders are identified as highly significant risk factors for prolonged abnormal sensations and permanent damage. Education, Awareness of pain management and discourage to visit traditional-healers can minimize its severity.

