



PAEDIATRIC DERMATOLOGY

HERPES ZOSTER IN CHILDREN: A SERIES OF 30 CASES

I Chabchoub⁽¹⁾ - F Rabhi⁽¹⁾ - M Ben Slimane⁽¹⁾ - W Abdelli⁽¹⁾ - S Youssef⁽¹⁾ - K Jaber⁽¹⁾ - M A Dhaoui⁽¹⁾

Military Hospital, Dermatology Department, Tunis, Tunisia⁽¹⁾

Introduction : Herpes zoster (HZ) is a vesicular eruption related to the reactivation of Varicella-Zoster Virus remained quiescent in the dorsal sensory ganglia after chickenpox. The incidence of HZ in children is low and the risk of contracting this disease increases with age.

Objective: The aim of our work is to describe the epidemio-clinical features of HZ in children.

Material and methods: This is a retrospective study conducted in the dermatology department between 2004 and 2017, identifying all cases of HZ occurring in patients under the age of 18.

Results : Thirty cases were collected: 17 boys and 13 girls. The average age was 11.8 years (range 2-17 years). HZ was more commonly reported in the age group 10-18 years (60%) followed by the age group 5-10 years (30%). All the patients were immunocompetent and with a history of chickenpox in their background. Sixteen (53.3%) had contracted chickenpox in their first year of life. Thoracic (63.4%) and lumbar (16.6%) dermatomes were the most frequent locations. A cervico-brachial HZ was observed in 4 patients (13.4%) and ophthalmic HZ in 2 patients (6.6%). Fourteen patients (46.6%) had painful symptoms. Both patients with ophthalmic HZ were given oral aciclovir. The majority of patients (53.3%) were treated with local care only. Complications like post-herpetic neuralgia were noted in only one case.

Conclusions: Primary infection with Varicella-Zoster virus is classically contracted during childhood, while its reactivation, HZ, mainly affects the adult. Our series highlights the fact that the incidence of HZ increases with age. The occurrence of chicken pox in the first year of life has been confirmed as a risk factor for HZ in childhood. Post-herpetic neuralgia, found in only one case in our series, is rare in children.

