ABSTRACT BOOK
ABSTRACTS

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RECURRENT ULCERATIONS AND NEUROPATHY IN A FILIPINO CHILD WITH PREVIOUSLY UNDIAGNOSED LEPROSY: A CASE OF LUCIO PHENOMENON IN THE PHILIPPINES

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Background: Lucio phenomenon is a distinct necrotizing lepra reaction arising from diffuse lepromatous leprosy. This severe reaction was previously thought to be exclusive to Mexico, but has since been observed in other countries. Here we report a case of Lucio phenomenon in the Philippines.

Observation: A 17 year old female was admitted for a 4-year history of recurrent, extensive ulcerations with crusting and purulent discharge involving the arms, legs, face and back. She was received in pain, bed-bound, and cachectic. On examination, she had thinning of the lateral eyebrows, erythema and induration of the left ear, hammer toe deformities, diffuse nerve enlargement and tenderness. Significant laboratory findings include low hemoglobin (69g/L), elevated ESR, negative ANA and moderate growth or MRSA on wound culture. Slit skin smear showed a 1+ bacterial index and biopsy showed the presence of bacilli with nerve infiltration. PCR sequencing revealed the presence of Mycobacterium leprae, confirming the diagnosis of lepromatous leprosy in lepra reaction. She was promptly started on multidrug therapy with rifampicin, clarithromycin and clofazimine for the leprosy with prednisone and pentoxifylline for the lepra reaction. She was discharged improved one week later, with complete resolution of ulcerations after three weeks.

Key message: Lucio phenomenon is a rare form of lepra reaction and its clinical presentation may be easily mistaken for other systemic conditions. Especially in endemic areas, clinical suspicion should remain high, and the diagnosis should be considered in patients presenting with extensive ulcerations and neuropathies. Prompt recognition and management will prevent significant morbidity and mortality.

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