Selected Abstracts of the 8th International Workshop on Neonatology

SYSTEMS MEDICINE IN PERINATOLOGY AND PEDIATRICS TAILORED BIOMARKERS, DRUGS AND TREATMENTS

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ABS 1

URINARY METABOLOMICS AS A NEW STRATEGY TO DISCRIMINATE RESPONSE TO IBUPROFEN THERAPY IN PRETERM NEONATES WITH PATENT DUCTUS ARTERIOSUS

M. Castell Miñana1, G. Quintás Soriano2, B. Fernández Tudela3, M. Vento Torres1

1Division of Neonatology, University and Polytechnic Hospital La Fe, Valencia, Spain
2Analytical Unit, Health Research Institute La Fe, Valencia, Spain
3Division of Paediatric Cardiology, University and Polytechnic Hospital La Fe, Valencia, Spain
4Neonatal Research Group, University and Polytechnic Hospital La Fe, Valencia, Spain

INTRODUCTION

Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) is a frequent congenital cardiac malformation in the preterm infants. Intravenous ibuprofen is the standard treatment for pharmacological closure, but up to 30% of the patients do not respond and need to undergo surgery. Echocardiography is a very sensitive tool to diagnose PDA but does not predict effective response to ibuprofen. Our aim was to develop a model capable of predicting response to treatment applying a novel metabolomics-based strategy by means of analysing urinary metabolome.

METHODS

Prospective, observational, longitudinal study enrolling preterm infants < 32 weeks of gestation treated with ibuprofen for a hemodynamically significant PDA (>1.5 mm). Ultrasound was performed before and after ibuprofen administration to determine response. Serial urinary samples were obtained by an internal validated non-invasive method (cotton-diaper technique) before and during treatment. Analysis of urine samples was carried out using LC-TOFMS. Multivariate analysis of the LCMS data was performed in MATLAB (Mathworks Inc. Natick, MA, USA) using in-house written scripts and the PLSToolbox (Eigenvector). Univariate statistical analysis was performed using SPSS v11 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA).

RESULTS

Total of 34 patients were enrolled in the study with a median gestational age 27 weeks (CI: 24-31) and median birthweight 1,065 g (CI: 660-2,059 g). 19 patients did respond to ibuprofen (responder = R), 15 did not respond (nonresponder = NR). Median gestational age and birthweight were statistically higher in NR group (p < 0.001). Ultrasound studies did not show any differences between both groups. PLSDA multivariate analysis of LC-MS data showed a statistically significant difference in the metabolomic profiles between R and NR from urine samples collected after 72 h upon intervention. Based on a set of 33 selected potential biomarkers, a second PLSDA model was used for the prediction of an external sample subset. Results showed different dynamic metabolomic responses between R and NR during subsequent ibuprofen doses.

CONCLUSIONS

Urinary metabolomics appears to be a promising complementary strategy as it reflects PDA and its response to treatment. It might be a suitable approach for an early prediction of the response.

REFERENCE


ABS 2

A METABOLOMIC APPROACH TO IDENTIFY PRETERM NEONATES BORN OF MOTHERS WITH CHORIOAMNIONITIS: PRELIMINARY DATA

L. Pugni1, A. Noto1, C. Pietrasanta1, L. Barberini2, B. Acaia2, M.W. Ossola2, M. Lussu4, F. Murgia2, L. Atzori5, F. Mosca2, V. Fanos2

1Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Department of Clinical Sciences and Community Health, Fondazione IRCCS Ca’ Granda Ospedale Maggiori Policlinico, University of Milan, Milan, Italy
2Department of Surgery, University of Cagliari, Cagliari, Italy
3Department of Public Health and Clinical and Molecular Medicine, University of Cagliari, Cagliari, Italy
4Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Fondazione IRCCS Ca’ Granda, Ospedale Maggiori Policlinico, University of Milan, Milan, Italy
5Department of Biomedical Sciences, University of Cagliari, Cagliari, Italy

OBJECTIVE

Histological chorioamnionitis (HCA) is a major risk factor for spontaneous preterm birth, especially at earlier gestational ages. Many studies have shown that antenatal exposure to inflammation makes neonatal outcome worse. This study was conducted to determine if metabolomic profiling of the urine can characterize preterm neonates born of mothers with HCA, also in order to identify biomarkers as early predictors of outcome in this population. To our knowledge, this is the first study of metabolomics performed on neonates exposed to intrauterine inflammation.
METHODS
We performed a matched case-control study to compare the metabolomic profile of urine collected from neonates born of mothers with HCA with a control group of neonates born of mothers without HCA, matched for gestational age (GA) at birth and birthweight (BW). A urine sample was taken non-invasively from each neonate on day 1, 7 and 14 of life. All samples were analyzed by (1)H nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy. A multivariate statistical analysis (principal components analysis and partial least squares-discriminant analysis) was used to identify differences in the metabolite profile of the urine between the two groups.

RESULTS
Twelve neonates (4 born of mothers with HCA and 8 controls) were studied (mean GA = 31 ± 3 weeks, SD 2 ± 5; mean BW = 1,610 g, SD 606.5). Different metabolic patterns were found between the two groups. Individual metabolites discriminating were the following: mannitol, 4-hydroxy-phenylacetate, p-cresol, myo-inositol, trimethylamine-N-oxide and 1-methylnicotinamide. However, statistical significance was not achieved probably due to the small sample size.

CONCLUSIONS
Based on these preliminary data, metabolomic analysis seems to differentiate preterm infants born of mothers with HCA from those born of mothers without HCA, even if a larger sample is necessary to achieve statistical significance. The next step could be the identification of biomarkers as early predictors of outcome in preterm babies exposed to intrauterine inflammation, in order to plan a more accurate and targeted follow-up.

REFERENCE

ABS 3

URINARY METABOLOMICS IN TWINS AT BIRTH

P. Paladini¹, A. Paladini², A. Noto³, L. Atzori⁴, L. Barberini², E. Puxeddù¹, A. Dessì³, F. Murgia⁴, M. Lussu¹, E. Locci⁶, F. Murgia⁴, V. Fanos³

¹Department of Pediatrics, University of Lecce, Italy  
²Cdt, Campus Biomedico, Rome, Italy  
³Department of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section, University of Cagliari, Italy  
⁴Department of Toxicology University of Cagliari, Italy

BACKGROUND
Metabolomics, is helping to understand the field of metabolism. Through the rapid characterization of small molecule (metabolites), this new “omics”, has the opportunity to explore the interactions such as: genotype-phenotype and genotype-enviromentype, which means it is possible to have a snapshot of the metabolic status, in normal or pathological conditions [1, 2]. Physiology of twins is quite different from that of singletons.

OBJECTIVES
The aim of this study is to evaluate metabolic trajectory of twins immediately after birth, and then after seven days through the metabolomics approach.

METHODS
Urine was collected (after ethical commette approval and parents consensus) from 15 twins after birth and then at seven days of life. A concentration of 1% of NaN₃ was added in order to avoid bacterial growth. Subsequently, ¹H-NMR-based metabolomics analysis was performed. Statistical analysis was carried out using Principal component analysis (PCA) and Partial Least Square-Data Analysis (PLS-DA).

RESULTS
Metabolomic approach showed characteristic profiles describing the difference between groups. In addition, the metabolites were used to build a predictive model for diagnosis. Differentiation between monochorionic and dichorionic twins was possible. Important metabolites were: galactitol, N-acetylcysteine, N-acetylglutamate, N-acetyltyrosine, methylguanidine, N-dimethylformamide, and 5-hydroxyindol-3-acetate.

CONCLUSIONS
We believe that this strategy will have a significative impact on the discovery of the new typical metabolic features at birth in twins, influencing immediate and long term epigenetic differences.

REFERENCES

ABS 4

FROM PRENATAL DIAGNOSIS TO NEONATOLOGY: RISK AND PROTECTIVE
FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOTHER-PRETERM CHILD RELATIONSHIP

E. Boni¹, V. Bellomi², C. Tzialla¹, P. Politi³, V. Martinelli², C. Klersy³, M. Stronati¹

¹Neonatal Intensive Care, Division of Neonatology IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo Foundation, Pavia, Italy
²Psychological Medicine, IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo Foundation, Pavia, Italy; Department of Public Health, Neurosciences, Experimental and Legal Medicine, University of Pavia, Italy
³Service of Biometry and Clinical Epidemiology, IRCCS Policlinico San Matteo Foundation, Pavia, Italy

OBJECTIVES

Previous research has shown that premature birth can affect the quality of the parent-child relationship. Little is known about maternal and paternal fetal attachment during pregnancy in women at risk for preterm delivery. The aim of this study was to investigate the association between parents’ prenatal attachment to the unborn child, gestational age and perinatal factors in a sample of inpatient pregnant women at risk for preterm birth and their partners.

METHODS

A cross-sectional sample of 11 consecutive inpatient pregnant women at risk for preterm delivery between 24-32 weeks gestation were included in this pilot study, which is part of a larger longitudinal protocol. The quality and intensity of maternal and paternal attachment were assessed through the Maternal Antenatal Attachment Scale (MAAS) and the Paternal Antenatal Attachment Scale (PAAS), respectively. Sociodemographical, clinical and psychological data were also collected. Correlations were analyzed using Spearman’s correlation coefficient. Results: The mean values (± SD) of the global scale of the MAAS and the MAAS quality and intensity subscales were 65.64 (± 9.53), 37.36 (± 5.07) and 28.27 (± 4.98), respectively. All of the study participants scored below the cutoff value of 49 on the MAAS quality subscale. Five of the 11 women scored ≥ 27 on the MAAS intensity subscale, a finding which suggests the presence of a negatively preoccupied attachment style. Further prosecution of the study will help to explore risk and protective factors affecting the mother-preterm child relationship and to develop targeted psychological intervention strategies.

REFERENCE


ABS 5

PROLONGED REFRIGERATED STORAGE OF HUMAN MILK: EFFECTS ON NUTRITIVE AND NON-NUTRITIVE CHARACTERISTICS

P. Di Nicola¹, P. Tonetto¹,², D. Gastaldi³, M. Giribaldi³, M.F. Ortoffi¹, S. Arslanoglu¹,², G. Moro², L. Cavallarin¹, E. Bertino¹

¹Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Department of Pediatrics, University of Turin, Italy
²Italian Association of Human Milk Banks, Milan, Italy
³Department of Analytical Chemistry, University of Turin, Italy

INTRODUCTION

Due to the limited knowledge on which common advice on human milk (HM) storage is based, current recommendations concerning safe human milk conservation are far from being univocal.

OBJECTIVE

In an attempt to clarify some of the uncertainties existing on the storage of HM, we designed a comprehensive study to investigate the effects of prolonged refrigeration on the nutritive and non-nutritive characteristics of HM, and on its microbiological composition.

METHODS

Human milk was collected and divided into 5 aliquots. One aliquot underwent analyses immediately, while the other aliquots were stored in the refrigerator for 24, 48, 72, and 96 hours before analysis. The temperature was constantly monitored. The samples were analysed for pH, free fatty acid (FFA) content, bile salt-dependent lipase (BSDL) activity, oxidative status, and bacterial profile. The experiment was replicated three times.

RESULTS

The continuous temperature monitoring of the refrigerator showed a mean value of 6.8 ± 1.1°C. Limited lipolysis was seen during prolonged refrigerated storage, consistently with a slight decrease in milk pH. Refrigeration preserved milk
overall oxidative status and the activity of BSDL. Moreover, the overall bacterial composition remained stable, with mean values for total bacteria, Enterobacteriaceae and coagulase positive Staphylococci counts under the recommended concentrations set for acceptability of milk in milk banks.

CONCLUSIONS
In conclusion, refrigeration of expressed human milk in controlled conditions for 96 hours allowed to maintain its bioactivity and nutritional quality, without compromising its microbiological safety.

ABS 6

USE OF DONOR HUMAN MILK IN NICU: IS DONOR MILK COMPETING WITH BREASTFEEDING OR SUPPORTING IT?

P. Di Nicola1, S. Arslanoglu1,5, G.E. Moro1,5, F. Chiale3, R. Bellù2,4, D. Turoli2, P. Tonetto1,3, E. Bertino1,3

1Italian Association of Human Milk Banks, Milan, Italy
2Italian Neonatal Network (INN), Italy
3SCDU Neonatology, University of Turin, Italy
4NICU - Manzoni Hospital, Lecco, Italy
5World Association of Perinatal Medicine (WAPM) Working Group on Nutrition

INTRODUCTION
Recent research and systematic reviews have reinforced the conclusion that breastfeeding and human milk (HM) confer health benefits for infant and the mother. Human milk confers health benefits of vital importance for the sick and preterm infants in neonatal intensive care units (NICUs). Mother’s own milk (MOM) is the first choice in preterm infant feeding and every effort should be made to promote lactation. When mother’s milk is not available or insufficient, donor human milk (DHM) is recommended. Yet, occasionally the concern that the use of DHM might decrease breastfeeding is being raised. The present data collection planned by Italian Association of Human Milk Banks (AIBLUD) in collaboration with Italian Neonatal Network (INN) attempted to address this concern.

MATERIAL AND METHODS
A total of 4,277 VLBW infants from 83 Italian NICUs were evaluated for this comparative analysis. Eighty-three Italian NICUs were divided into two groups: centers with a human milk bank (HMB), centers without a HMB; the available parameters in the network – “any and exclusive breastfeeding rates” and “formula only” at discharge – were compared.

RESULTS
The NICUs with and without HMB were comparable in terms of NICU characteristics and size. Exclusive breastfeeding rates at discharge were significantly higher in NICUs with a HMB when compared to NICUs without (29.6 vs. 16%, respectively, p = 0.007) (Table 1). Any breastfeeding rates at discharge were also slightly higher in the NICUs with HMB (60.4 vs. 52.8%), and formula only rates were slightly lower in the NICUs with HMB (26.5 vs. 31.3%), but these differences were not significant.

Table 1. Lactation rates at discharge for VLBW infants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Italian NICUs without a HMB N = 64</th>
<th>Range (%)</th>
<th>Italian NICUs with a HMB N = 19</th>
<th>Range (%)</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any breastfeeding at discharge (%)</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>4-85.1</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>29.7-84.1</td>
<td>0.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusive breastfeeding at discharge (%)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0-57.9</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>0-77.8</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formula only at discharge (%)</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>1.6-62.71</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>0-51.35</td>
<td>0.188</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSIONS
This report shows that the presence of a HMB and the use of DHM in NICU increase breastfeeding rates at discharge for VLBW infants.

ABS 7

PRENATAL DIAGNOSIS OF METHYLAMALONIC ACIDURIA AND HOMOCYSTINURIA Cbl-C TYPE USING DNA ANALYSIS

A. Zappu1, S. Incollu1, R. Puddu2, F. Liliu2, G. Loudianos2

1Department of Biomedical Science and Biotechnology, University of Cagliari, Italy
2Microcitemico Hospital, ASL 8, Cagliari, Italy

Methylmalonic aciduria (MMA) and homocystinuria, Cbl-C type is the most frequent inborn error of vitamin B12. Cbl-C patients present with a heterogeneous clinical picture [1]. Early-onset patients, presenting symptoms within the first year, show a multisystem disease with severe neurological, ocular, haematological, renal, gastrointestinal, cardiac, and pulmonary manifestations. Late-onset patients present a
milder clinical phenotype with acute or slowly progressive neurological symptoms and behavioral disturbance. The unfavorable outcome observed in most patients confirms that actual interventions, mostly focused on improving biochemical parameters, are not sufficient to prevent organ damage and that individual differences may also influence the response to therapies. The gene responsible for the Cbl-C defect, \textit{MMACHC}, has been recently identified \cite{2}. More than 40 mutations have been reported. A family of Sardinian origin with a 5-years old child affected by MMA and homocystinuria, Cbl-C type was referred to our Institution for genetic counseling. The patient was genetically analyzed for mutation in \textit{MMACHC} gene and resulted homozygote, while both parents were heterozygote for c.271dupA mutation. Following not-directive genetic counseling during which the different options available were fully discussed, the parents opted for prenatal diagnosis. A transabdominal chorionic villi biopsy was performed at 12 weeks' gestation. DNA was extracted by standard methods. DNA was amplified for the exon 2 of \textit{MMACHC} gene and sequencing analysis was performed that showed the normal sequence in the fetal DNA. To our knowledge this is the first case of prenatal diagnosis of MMA and homocystinuria, Cbl-C type using DNA analysis. The results suggest the importance of molecular analysis in prenatal diagnosis of MMA and homocystinuria.

REFERENCES

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ABS 8

HUMAN BREAST MILK VS FORMULA MILK. IS \textsuperscript{1}H-NMR METABOLOMICS ABLE TO HELP TO FIND THE RIGHT FORMULA?

A. Noto\textsuperscript{1}, L. Atzori\textsuperscript{2}, P. Caboni\textsuperscript{2}, M. Lussu\textsuperscript{2}, F. Cesare Marincola\textsuperscript{3}, F. Murgia\textsuperscript{2}, A. Reali\textsuperscript{1}, M. Puddu\textsuperscript{1}, V. Fanos\textsuperscript{1}

\begin{itemize}
  \item[1] Neotnal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section, University of Cagliari, Italy
  \item[2] Department of Toxicology University of Cagliari, Italy
  \item[3] Department of Chemical and Geological Science, University of Cagliari, Italy
\end{itemize}

RATIONALE

Currently the continuous progress of the neonatal intensive care unit allows the survival of almost 85% of low and extremely low premature infants. However several issues related to prematurity, including respiratory and intestinal immaturity makes difficult to adapt to the nutritional needs of these infants with a high risk of malnutrition and poor growth. The food choices are therefore a key role in the management of preterm infants. Although some premature babies grow and develop well with only breast milk, in the case of extremely premature infants and children, this food do not meet the adequate nutritional needs of the newborn. It therefore becomes necessary to use artificial products able to adapt well to the needs for growth and development of preterm. However, the effects of using artificial products to compensate the metabolic imbalances of the preterm infant is still a topic to debate.

AIM

Aim of this experimental work is to analyze, through a multivariate approach, the profiles of the aqueous extract of human breast milk from mothers who had a preterm infants and to compare it with the infant formula milk for preterm infants.

METHODS

Thirty complete 24 h expressions of milk were obtained at specific postpartum weeks (from 1 to 13), the total daily volume of milk was well mixed and an aliquot was removed and stored at -80°C for analysis. \textsuperscript{1}H-NMR experiments on the aqueous extracts of milk were carried out on a Varian Unity 500 spectrometer. Multivariate analysis were performed using Simca P-13+.

RESULTS

Multivariate analysis clearly indicate differences between the metabolic profile of the human breast and formula milk. In particular, the quantification of the following metabolites, choline, phosphocholine, creatine, creatinine are found to be predominant in the discrimination between the different types of milk.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study, although still in a preliminary form, may represent a first step towards the development of a protocol for the optimization of the food in the formula.

REFERENCE

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ABS 9

A 1H-NMR STUDY OF CRISPONI SYNDROME: CAN METABOLOMICS HELP TO DESCRIBE THE DISORDER?

M. Lussu1, G. Crisponi2, F. Murgia1, L. Crisponi2, A. Noto3, E. Locci1, L. Barberini2, L. Atzori1, V. Fanos2, G. Ottonello2

1Department of Toxicology, University of Cagliari, Italy
2Neurogenetic and Neuropharmacology Institute – CNR, Cagliari, Italy
3Department of Pediatrics and Clinical Medicine, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute, University of Cagliari, Italy

INTRODUCTION

Crisponi syndrome (MIM 601378) is a severe autosomal recessive disorder described for the first time in 1996 by Giangiorgio Crisponi [1] characterized by episodes of marked muscular contraction of the facial muscles like tetanus spasms associated with typical dysmorphic features, which include chubby cheeks, broad nose with anteverted nostrils, camptodactyly and long philtrum. This syndrome is often associated to hyperthermia, and sudden death in most cases. The syndrome is caused by mutations in the cytokine receptor-like factor 1 (CRLF1) gene, mutations of which have also been associated with cold-induced sweating syndrome, and it can be hypothesized that these two syndromes reflect different manifestations of the same entity [2]. Very little is known about the patho-physiology of the gene involved, so it’s very important to develop new approach to investigate this disorder.

OBJECTIVES

Aim of this study is to identify metabolic differences between patients affected by Crisponi Syndrome and their parents, carriers of the mutated gene. The study included 7 patients affected by Crisponi Syndrome and their parents, carriers of the mutated gene. A urine sample was collected from both, patients and parents, and an aliquot of 540 µl was mixed with 60 µl of 1.5 M phosphate buffer solution (pH 7.4) 10% TSP (Trimethylsilyl propanoic acid) in D2O to stabilize the pH of the final solution. TSP was added to provide an internal reference for the chemical shifts (0 ppm), then urines were analyzed using 1H-NMR Varian 500 MHz. NMR spectra were subjected to multivariate analysis in order to combine metabolic variables using SIMCA-P+ (version 13.0, Umetrics, Sweden).

RESULT

Data were analyzed using a PLS-DA (Partial least squares discriminant analysis) model which was able to discriminate between three groups, patients, mother and father. Using this mathematical approach we were able to find some metabolites that seem to be responsible of the groups separation. The metabolites are: hippurate, taurine, TMA-Oxide (decreased in Crisponi patients) and lactate (increased in Crisponi patients).

CONCLUSION

The use of metabolomics appears to be a new approach in Crisponi Syndrome. The multivariate analysis shows different metabolic profiles between three groups, patients, mothers and fathers. The investigation for the meaning of the discriminating metabolites may improve current knowledge on this rare disease and may describe the pathways involved.

REFERENCES


ABS 10

NESTIN IMMUNOREACTIVITY IN THE DEVELOPING HUMAN KIDNEY


1Hepatology Clinic, Matsumoto, Japan
2Department of Pathology, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section, 3Pediatric Department, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy
4Department of Biochemistry, University of Cagliari, Italy
5Institute of Biochemistry, Sacred Heart Catholic University, Rome, Italy
BACKGROUND
Nestin is a intermediate filament protein with a role in regulating cytoskeleton structure, also utilized as a stem cell marker in developing central nervous system. In adult kidneys, nestin expression is restricted to podocytes.

DESIGN
This study was aimed at analyzing nestin expression in the human kidney in different phases of development. To this end, twelve kidneys from seven fetuses (gestational age [GA] 9-19) and five newborns (GA at birth 26-36) were formalin-fixed, routinely processed and paraffin-embedded. Paraffin sections were immunostained for nestin.

RESULTS
In the fetal kidney, nestin expression was mainly detected in the undifferentiated metanephric mesenchymal. Moreover, nestin was expressed in developing glomeruli, in the area occupied by podocyte precursors. No significant reactivity for nestin was detected in the cap mesenchyme. Only rarely, we also observed nestin reactivity in cell of the Bowman’s capsule. In newborn kidneys, nestin expression was detected in different cell types: in developing podocytes, in mesangial precursors and in cells committed toward the endothelial lineage. A strong interglomerular variability in nestin expression was also found.

CONCLUSIONS
Our data indicate that nestin is strongly expressed in the human developing kidney in different cell types, including podocyte precursors, endothelium of glomerular capillaries, and mesangial cells that populate the developing glomerulus. These preliminary findings imply that nestin may play a role in the modulation of human kidney development and function.

ABS 11

A NON-INVASIVE APPROACH TO CHARACTERIZE EPILEPTIC CHILDREN BORN ELBW COMPARED TO NON EPILEPTIC: A METABOLOMICS POINT OF VIEW

C. Serci1, F. Murgia2, D. Pruna, F. Marrosu3, L. Atzori2, G. Palmas4, L. Barberini5, M. Lussu2, E. Locci2, A. Noto4, V. Fanos1

1Department of Pediatric Neuropsychiatry, University of Cagliari, Italy
2Department of Toxicology, University of Cagliari, Italy
3Department of Neurological Sciences, University of Cagliari, Italy

INTRODUCTION
Extremely low birth weight (ELBW) are a class of preterm infants with a birth weight less than 1,000 g. They usually born at 27 weeks of gestational age or younger. These preterm infants represent a population at high risk for brain damage and neurodevelopmental disability. Epilepsy is a major neurological sequela of ELBW infants [1] with a range of incidence between 4.1% and 18.7%. The occurrence of seizures in these children reflects the vulnerability of the immature brain for neuropathological processes that take place in that period of life. In particular, periventricular leukomalacia and severe intraventricular hemorrhage or post-hemorrhagic hydrocephalus, have been associated with a high risk of seizures in the first months of life as well as in the childhood [2].

OBJECTIVES
Aim of this study is to explore the metabolic differences between a group of children born ELBW who developed epilepsy and a group of children born ELBW without, as control.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Urine samples were collected from 7 children with epilepsy and 9 controls. Children were matched for age, sex, birth weight, gestational age, growth curve, perinatal conditions and cerebral echography. The samples were prepared aliquoting 540 μl of urine and adding 60 μl of phosphate buffer (1.5M, pH 7.4 with 10% Trimethylsilyl propanoic acid in D20). Urines were analyzed using 1H-NMR Varian 500 MHz. NMR spectra were subjected to multivariate analysis in order to combine metabolic variables using SIMCA-P+(version 13.0, Umetrics, Sweden).

RESULTS
Spectra were aligned, binned, normalized and then analyzed using a PLS-DA (Partial least squares discriminant analysis) model. The mathematical model was able to discriminate between the group of epileptic children and the group of non-epileptic. The metabolites discriminating the separation between the two classes are: citric acid, alanine and taurine (increased in epileptics compared to controls), glycine, malonic acid, creatinine, sugars (decreased in epileptics compared to controls).

CONCLUSION
These preliminary results seems to be promising for the study of the postnatal metabolic maturation, as well as the identification of predictors biomarkers characterizing early events of the epilepsy which may help for the treatment of this type of diseases.
REFERENCES


ABS 12

EARLY CESSATION AND DERANGEMENT OF NEPHROGENESIS IN THE PRETERM HUMAN KIDNEY FOLLOWING IBUPROFEN TREATMENT

C. Gerosa¹, C. Loddo², L. Ruggeri², S. Nemolato¹, B. Pinna², A. Sanna¹, E. Di Felice¹, F. Farci¹, C. Fanni², D. Fanni¹

¹Division of Pathology, Department of Surgical Sciences and ²Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section. AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy

BACKGROUND

Preterms are commonly exposed to ibuprofen therapy in the neonatal period for the treatment of patent ductus arteriosus, exposing the developing kidney to a potentially nephrotoxic drug.

DESIGNS

The aim of this study was to analyze at histology, the kidney of a 23 wks preterm affected by a patent ductus arteriosus who survived four weeks and underwent 2 cycles of ibuprofen therapy.

RESULTS

At autopsy the histological study of kidneys evidenced the following pathological changes:

1. marked reduction of the subcapsular nephrogenic zone;
2. severe modifications of the sequence of events characterizing normal nephrogenesis (Fig. 1);
3. high percentage of abortive glomeruli;
4. apoptosis of podocyte precursor in developing glomeruli, leading to glomerular necrosis (Fig. 2);
5. apoptosis of proximal tubular cells.

CONCLUSION

The effects of ibuprofen on the developing human kidney have been very scarcely studied. Recently a study in preterm baboons revealed the ability of ibuprofen to induce early cessation of nephrogenesis [1]. Our study clearly shows that ibuprofen therapy may cause not only a block but even a derangement of nephrogenesis, giving rise to abortive and mal developed glomeruli. The finding of massive podocyte apoptosis, suggests that ibuprofen may potentially play a role in podocytopathies. The alteration of number and function of nephrons likelihood affects not only the early stages of life but influence the renal susceptibility to disease in childhood and adulthood.

REFERENCE


ABS 13

THYMOSIN BETA-4 TRANSLOCATION FROM THE TRANS-GOLGI NETWORK TO THE NUCLEUS IN KIDNEY PROXIMAL TUBULE CELL LINE LLC-PK1 UNDER STARVATION

P. Coni¹, S. Nemolato¹, E. Di Felice¹, A. Sanna¹, G. Ottonello², T. Cabras³, I. Messana³, ⁴, M. Castagnola³, G. Pichiri¹
Thymosin beta-4 (Tβ4) is a multifunctional peptide involved in cytoskeletal organization, being considered the most important G-actin sequestering factor in mammalian cells. Recently, our group evidenced Tβ4 expression in the developing genitourinary tract and, in particular, in the developing newborn kidney [1].

**DESIGN**

This study was aimed at verifying the Tβ4 expression pattern in a kidney proximal cell line (LLC-PK1), derived from a newborn piglet. Tβ4 immunoreactivity was analyzed, by a commercial antibody, in culture cells in normal conditions and under starvation, following 72 hours of serum deprivation.

**RESULTS**

Tβ4 expression in normal conditions was restricted to the cytoplasm of culture cells, being mainly detected in perinuclear areas, a finding suggestive for its localization in the Golgi apparatus (Fig 1). After serum deprivation, we observed a redistribution of Tβ4 in the whole cytoplasm, paralleled by the translocation of the peptide into the nuclear envelope (Fig 2).

**CONCLUSIONS**

Our preliminary data show the ability of Tβ4 to change its localization in proximal tubule cells, according with different cell conditions. The redistribution of the peptide in the cytoplasm and its migration into the nucleus clearly indicates that, under stress caused by serum deprivation, Tβ4 plays a role in a possible cellular anti-stress response. Further studies at molecular level are needed, in order to better clarify the intimate nature of this finding.

**REFERENCE**


**ABS 14**

**hCTR1 EXPRESSION IN THE DEVELOPING KIDNEY: HOW COPPER IS INVOLVED IN HUMAN NEPHROGENESIS**

E. Di Felice1, D. Fanni1, S. Nemolato1, V. Zurrida2, I. Murgianu2, D. Gariel2, C. Gerosa1

1Department of Pathology, 2Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy

**BACKGROUND**

hCTR1 is a high affinity membrane copper permease that mediates the physiological uptake of copper ions. Given the role of copper in organogenesis, hCTR1 is considered an essential protein for early embryonic development.

**DESIGN**

Since few data are available regarding molecules involved in copper uptake in the developing human kidney, this study was aimed at verifying, by immunocytochemistry, hCTR1 expression in the kidney of fetuses and newborns, ranging from 15 up to 38 weeks of gestation.

**RESULTS**

Immunostaining for hCTR1 was detected in 20 out of 23 kidney examined. In the positive
cases, hCTR1 was mainly expressed in the cap mesenchymal cells localized in the nephrogenic zone under the kidney capsule (Fig. 1). Renal vesicles, comma- and S-shaped bodies also expressed the copper transport protein. Developing and mature glomeruli were constantly negative. hCTR1 was also found in proximal and distal tubules (Fig. 2).

ABS 15

ULTRASTRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE EARLY STAGES THAT CHARACTERIZE CAP MESENCHYMAL INDUCTION AND URETERIC BUD GROWING IN THE DEVELOPING NOD MOUSE KIDNEY

M. Piludu¹, M. Piras¹, D. Fanni², C. Gerosa², S. Nemolato², E. Schirru², S. Muntoni³, N. Iacovidou¹, T. Congiu⁴

¹Department of Biomedical Sciences, ²Department of Pathology, University of Cagliari, Italy
³Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Aretaieion Hospital, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Medical School, Greece
⁴Department of Surgical and Morphological Sciences, University of Insubria, Italy

BACKGROUND

The early events that in mouse and in several other animal species lead to the development of the adult kidney, are mainly induced by specific signals of the ureteric bud towards the surrounding metanephric mesenchyme. The aim of the present study was to investigate by means of electron microscopy the morphological events that characterize the early stages of the mesenchymal-to-epithelial transition of cap mesenchymal cells, analyzing the relationship between cap mesenchymal induction and ureteric bud growing.

DESIGN

Normal kidneys of newborn NOD mice were fixed in a mixture of 3% formaldehyde and 0.1% glutaraldehyde in 0.1 M cacodylate buffer and processed for standard electron microscopic techniques. The samples were dehydrated in a cold graded methanol series and embedded in LR gold resin. Ultrathin sections were cut with diamond knife, collected on formvar-coated 100-mesh grids, stained with uranyl acetate and bismuth subnitrate, observed and photographed in a JEOL 100S transmission electron microscope (TEM).

RESULTS

Evident nephrogenesis was observed in the outer portion of the renal cortex and resulted characterized by the interaction of two primordial derivates: the metanephric mesenchyme and the ureteric buds. Mesenchymal cells were found to condense around the tips of the growing ureteric buds (UB), giving rise to specific cellular solid aggregates: the cap mesenchymal aggregates (CMA) (Fig. 1). At the ultrastructural level, the cellular constituents of the cap mesenchymal aggregates exhibited peculiar morphological features. In general they were characterized by a small cell

CONCLUSIONS

Our preliminary data evidence a strong expression of hCTR1 in the developing human kidney. Immunoreactivity for this protein in cells undergoing mesenchymal-epithelial transition suggests a role for copper and for its transporter hCTR1 in the early phases of nephrogenesis. hCTR1 expression in proximal and distal tubules indicates the relevance of copper in the differentiation and function of renal tubular cells.
body with a scarce cytoplasm containing few cellular organelles, whereas the nucleus was usually large (Fig. 1-2).

**Figure 1.**

**Figure 2.**

**CONCLUSIONS**

Cap mesenchymal induction is initiated by the growing ureteric buds, determining the differentiation and proliferation process of the mesenchymal cells that start to condense around the tips of the ureteric buds. In turn, cap mesenchymal cells seem to stimulate the growth and the branching of the ureteric bud. Although important questions concerning the factors that regulate the reciprocal induction process between ureteric buds and metanephric mesenchyme remain to be ascertained, the present study provides further evidences of the complex sequence of morphogenetic events that trigger the epithelialization of the metanephric mesenchyme.

**ABS 16**

**THE SYNDROME OF THE EMILATUS**

S. Vendemmia¹, M. Vendemmia²

¹Past President of Italian Society of Hospital Pediatricians, Chief Emeritus of Pediatrics and Neonatology, Aversa, Italy
²Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, San Sebastiano Hospital, Caserta, Italy

**INTRODUCTION**

We describe the “syndrome of the Emilatus”. This is probably a new syndrome characterized, since birth, by hypotrophy of the emisoma, left facial asymmetry, left micro enophtalmus, micrognathia, hypoplasia of the ipsilateral ear and of the left brain, dorsal-lumbar scoliosis right- convex, reduction in length of the lower left limb with curvature of the tibia and left foot launch supinated, reduction in length of the upper left, micropenis.

**CASE REPORT**

Born at term (uneventful pregnancy), elective cesarean section, from non consanguineous parents and apparently healthy. Family history completely negative for malformation syndromes. Evident at birth marked hypotrophy of the left emisoma. The stages of psychomotor development are moderately slow. The clinical picture, which was investigated by instrumental, laboratory and cytogenetic analysis, looking for microdeletions and microduplications, probably has a source post-zygotic. The question can regard a possible alteration of gene regulation mechanisms that are known to be able to explain the various forms of asymmetry. The genetic study using array CGH revealed a de novo deletion, not present in the parents, on the long arm of chromosome 12 (12p13.33 microdeletion). A further deletion is, however, also present in the father, the 4q13.3, but we don’t believe that this has a pathological significance. Any way, we don’t know specific genes in this area associated with the clinical picture of our little patient, but certainly the deletion is correlated with the framework malformation.

The tests performed showed a shortening of the left lower and in particular the measurement of the lower limbs, carried out by excluding the epiphyses, are: right femur 26.2 cm, left femur 25.5 cm, right tibia 21 cm, left tibia 18.4 cm. The radiogram showed a lower limb length discrepancy of 43 mm. We also evaluated the difference in length of the upper limbs and precisely: right humerus 19.2 cm, left humerus 18.6 cm, right radio 14.1 cm, left radio 13.6 cm, right ulna 14.9 cm, left ulna 14.5 cm. There is also a dorsal-lumbar scoliosis right- convex with hypoplasia of the left side of the corresponding vertebral bodies. MRI brain showed asymmetry of the volume of the splanchnocranium, hypoplasia of the left cerebral hemisfere and microphthalmia, small areas of altered signal probably gliosis or...
malacic areas, in the context of the deep white matter of the semi-oval center and of the corona radiata, within the peritrigonal area.

The ophthalmologist found high myopia (11) to the right side and microphthalmos to the left eye. Audiometric assessment showed normoacusia.

**DISCUSSION**

This case had come to our attention as a possible example of atypical Goldenhar Syndrome. The grading in the facio-auriculo-vertebral spectrum appears unlikely because the more overt forms of expressiveness and involvement of the limbs determine primitively radial segment lesions, which are apparently absent in this baby. The question can involve a possible alteration of gene regulation mechanisms that are known to be able to explain various forms of asymmetry. One of the most significant aspect is the information to parents for a future pregnancy: all these forms of asymmetry, arising from clinically normal parents, are sparse.

Taking charge of this baby is essentially symptomatic: psychomotricity, periodic eye examinations and a follow-up for orthopedic treatment of the asymmetry.

**ABS 17**

**BIRTH IN ITALY: 2011 TRENDS AND 2012 FORECASTS**

I. Farnetani¹, C. Palazzini², F. Farnetani³

¹University of Milan-Bicocca, Journalist, Collaborator of the Institute of the Italian Encyclopedia “Treccani”, Italy
²Pedagogist and psycho-educational Counselor, Lecturer at the Pontifical University Lateran in Rome, Italy
³Dermatologist, Collaborator of the Institute of the Italian Encyclopedia “Treccani”, Italy

**OBJECT OF THE STUDY**

To assess the state of birth in 2011 and to estimate the number of newborn babies in Italy in 2012.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The study was based on provisional data of the 2011 ISTAT (National Statistical Institute).

**RESULTS**

In 2011, 546,606 children were born, 15,338 less than in 2010. A decreasing trend continues from 2008, when 576,659 were born.

September and October are classically the months with the highest number of births. But this trend has changed in 2011: in the North and in Sardinia the month of birth was highest in August, in the south and in Sicily in September, while in the center the record was recorded in November.

This probably means that in the North, where in the past the economy was strong, the crisis has been felt before: in winter, the population began to spend more time at home, and this has led to a slight advance of conceptions.

In the South, where the crisis was always present, the highest value of birth comes into play photoperiod and light effect that favors the conception in a certain period of the year, while the figure for the center is a bit more difficult to explain, and is primarily linked to the large number of babies born in Rome.

The month in which babies are born less for 2011 was April. This confirms that July and August are negative for conceptions, because with the summer solstice, the days are getting shorter, but mainly because such high temperatures damage sperm.

**CONCLUSION**

From September to December 2011 have been ‘lost’ almost 11,000 neonates in comparison with the previous year: the crisis has been felt heavily in the early months of 2011 and influenced the choice to conceive a child.

For 2012 a further loss of 25,000 neonates is expected (520,000).

**REFERENCES**


**ABS 18**

**NEONATAL TRANSPORT IN ITALIAN REGIONS**

I. Farnetani¹, C. Palazzini², F. Farnetani³

¹University of Milan-Bicocca, Journalist, Collaborator of the Institute of the Italian Encyclopedia “Treccani”, Italy
²Pedagogist and psycho-educational Counselor, Lecturer at the Pontifical University Lateran in Rome, Italy
³Dermatologist, Collaborator of the Institute of the Italian Encyclopedia “Treccani”, Italy

**OBJECT OF THE STUDY**

To estimate the number of newborn babies who were assisted with different types of TNE (neonatal emergency transport); to evaluate the actual (2010) utility and availability of the service.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

On the basis of the regional TNE allocated and the annual number of newborn babies in each area (results provided by ISTAT 2008 – National Statistical Institute) we have estimated the number and percentage of newborn babies assisted with various types of TNE.
RESULTS
Results obtained are presented in Tab. 1-5.

CONCLUSION
Only 62.8% of newborn babies can be transported in a safety way (see Tab. 1, 2)

Table 1. Neonatal transport provided and arranged with doctors and nurses available in shifts for the transport.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Estimated no. of grandparents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liguria</td>
<td>12,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazio</td>
<td>56,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campania</td>
<td>60,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>129,947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Neonatal emergency transport service provided just in case of need: doctors must arrive within 20 minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Estimated no. of grandparents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piedmont</td>
<td>39,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aosta Valley</td>
<td>2,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lombardy</td>
<td>98,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trentino-Südtirol</td>
<td>10,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veneto</td>
<td>48,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friuli Venezia Giulia</td>
<td>10,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umbria</td>
<td>8,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Marche</td>
<td>14,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>232,428</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Regions where a neonatal transport system exists in part.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Estimated no. of grandparents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuscany</td>
<td>33,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apulia</td>
<td>38,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicily</td>
<td>49,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>121,731</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Regions where a neonatal transport system does not exist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Estimated no. of grandparents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzo</td>
<td>11,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basilicata</td>
<td>4,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calabria</td>
<td>17,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emilia Romagna</td>
<td>41,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molise</td>
<td>2,507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardinia</td>
<td>13,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>92,553</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Those born in Italy in 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Estimated no. of grandparents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sassari</td>
<td>63,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuoro</td>
<td>30,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cagliari</td>
<td>105,285*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cristiano</td>
<td>34,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olbia-Tempi</td>
<td>28,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogliastra</td>
<td>10,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medio Campidano</td>
<td>19,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbonia-Iglesias</td>
<td>25,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>317,259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Town of Cagliari: 32,471.

REFERENCES

GRANDPARENTS IN EIGHT PROVINCES IN SARDINIA

I. Farnetani1, C. Palazzini2, F. Farnetaniet

1University of Milan-Bicocca, Journalist, Collaborator of the Institute of the Italian Encyclopedia “Treccani”, Italy

AIM
To evaluate the amount of money saved by each Sardinian family determined by grandparents’ role.

METHODS
Data processing using ISTAT (National Statistical Institute).

RESULTS
In Sardinia, there are 315,268 grandparents (see Tab. 1). Actually, 22.3% (58,140 grandparents) look after their grandchildren while the parents are working and 30% (71,487 grandparents) while the parents have occasional engagements: grandparents; 13.2% (31,455 grandparents) when parents want some time to themselves; 10.2% (24,305 grandparents) when grandchildren are on holiday and 9.4% (22,400 grandparents) when their grandchildren are ill.

REFERENCES

IBUPROFEN VERSUS INDOMETHACIN FOR PATENT DUCTUS ARTERIOSUS: PRACTICE

Pedagogist and psycho-educational Counselor, Lecturer at the Pontifical University Lateran in Rome, Italy
Dermatologist, Collaborator of the Institute of the Italian Encyclopedia “Treccani”, Italy
ATTITUDE VARIATIONS AMONG EUROPE AND UNITED STATES

M.A. Marcialis, R. Irmesi, C. Fanni

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Paucritecture Institute and Neonatal Section, AOU Cagliari, Italy

INTRODUCTION

Patent Ductus Arteriosus is very common in Very Low Birth Weight Infants affecting approximatively 65% of the newborns < 28 weeks and up to 80% of the premature babies weighing < 800 g. Two main Non-Steroidal Drugs have been used in the treatment of PDA, indomethacin (INDO) and ibuprofen (IBU). The first clinical trials comparing IBU with INDO for PDA were small and only in the recent decades the studies have become more relevant.

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of our study is to compare the efficacy and safety of IBU versus INDO in inducing closure of the PDA in preterm and to determine possible practice attitude variations among Europe an US in the use of NSAIDs for PDA.

RESULTS

In the European group of trials (Tab. 1) we identified 8 main studies: 3 single centre randomized controlled 2 multicenter randomized controlled, 1 single centre retrospective study, 1 prospective randomized controlled study and 1 single centre randomized controlled study with a total of 572 premature babies enrolled. The gestational age of the participants varied between 24-34 wk. Ductus closure was seen in 66 to 100% of the preterm babies belonging to the INDO group and varied between 62 to 82.6 % in the newborn of the IBU group. The adverse effects (oliguria, increase in serum creatinine, reduction of cerebral and mesenteric blood flow) were more significant in the INDO group in all trials. None study reported the use of INDO prophylaxis. In case of failure of the first or reopening PDA most of the NICUs repeated a second course with the same drug or, only in one NICU, with INDO. In 5 of the 8 trials resistant PDA was lageted.

Data from the US group were taken by 4 retrospective cohort studies (Tab. 2). Most of the participants were very low birth weight and had low gestational age (< 1,000 g, < 27 wk) with a total of 869 premature babies enrolled. Successful closure rate with INDO varied from 62 to 68% and was seen in the 58 to 71% of the partecipants of the IBU group. In one of the 4 trials INDO prophylaxis was adopted in the 32% of INDO group and 42% of IBU group in another study indo prophylaxis was used in premature babies < 750 g or < 27 wk. In 1 of the 4 studies the greater increase of the creatinine and decrease in urine output happened in INDO group, death, medical and surgical necrotizing enterocolitis, or spontaneous intestinal perforation was 40% in the INDO group and 17% in the IBU group, without any differences in serum creatinine between the groups. In one of the remaining 2 studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors and Study</th>
<th>Ibuprofen</th>
<th>Indomethacin</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mosca et al., 1997, Italy</td>
<td>1 v 10 mg/kg and 5 mg/kg after 24-48 h</td>
<td>1 v 0.2 mg/kg every 24 hours</td>
<td>Ductus closure in 75% after the first dose of INDO and in 62.5% after the first dose of IBU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pozzati et al., 1999, Italy</td>
<td>1 v 10 mg/kg and 5 mg/kg after 24-48 h</td>
<td>1 v 0.2 mg/kg and 0.1 mg/kg after 24-48 h</td>
<td>Closure PDA Indo group 100% and in IBU group 77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Overmeere et al., 2000, Belgium</td>
<td>1 v 10 mg/kg and 5 mg/kg after 24-48 h</td>
<td>1 v 0.2 mg/kg every 12 hours</td>
<td>Closure PDA Indo group 66% and in IBU group 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patel et al., 2000, GB</td>
<td>1 v 10 mg/kg and 5 mg/kg after 24-48 h</td>
<td>1 v 0.2-0.25 mg/kg every 12 hours</td>
<td>Closure PDA Indo group 93% and IBU group 78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lago et al., 2002, Italy</td>
<td>1 v 10 mg/kg and 5 mg/kg after 24-48 h</td>
<td>1 v 0.2 mg/kg every 12 hours</td>
<td>Closure PDA Indo group 69% in Indo group and 73% in IBU group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanos et al., 2004, Italy</td>
<td>Lysine i.v 10 mg/kg and 5 mg/kg after 24-48 h</td>
<td>1 v 0.2 mg/kg every 12 hours</td>
<td>Closure PDA Indo group 75% and 80% in IBU group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gimeno-Navarro et al., 2005, Spain</td>
<td>1 v 10 mg/kg and 5 mg/kg after 24-48 h</td>
<td>1 v 0.2 mg/kg every 12 hours</td>
<td>Closure PDA 87.5% in the Indo group and 82.6% in the IBU group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zanardo et al., 2005, Italy</td>
<td>Lysine 10 mg/kg i.v followed by 2 doses of 5 mg/kg each after 24 and 48 h</td>
<td>3 doses i.v of 0.2 mg/kg at 12 h intervals</td>
<td>Closure of the PDA Indo group 87.5% and IBU 72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E: diagnosis (echocardio), C: diagnosis (clinical).
Table 2. IBU vs INDO Main studies published in USA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors and Study</th>
<th>Ibuprofen</th>
<th>Indomethacin</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L Katakam et al., 2010, US</td>
<td>3 doses of 10 mg/kg, 5 mg/kg, and 5 mg/kg at 24 hour intervals</td>
<td>3 doses every 12 h: &lt; 48 h 0.2 mg/kg, 0.1 mg/kg and 0.1 mg/kg; 2-7 days 0.2 mg/kg; and &gt; 7 days 0.2 mg/kg, 0.25 mg/kg, and 0.25 mg/kg</td>
<td>Closure of the PDA 62% in Indo group and 56% in Ibu group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kushnir, Pinheiro, 2011, Albany – US</td>
<td>185 pts (2007-2008) 10 mg/kg then 5 mg/kg daily for 2 doses</td>
<td>165 pts (2005-2006) 0.2 mg/kg then 0.1 mg/kg IV daily for 2 doses &lt; 750 g: 0.2 mg/kg daily for 3 doses 750-1,000 g: 0.2 mg/kg every 12 h &gt; 1,000 g</td>
<td>Closure PDA 68% in Indo group and 71% in Ibu group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellington P. et al., 2011</td>
<td>(Dec 2006-Oct 2007) Lysine 10 mg/kg then 5 mg/kg daily for 2 doses</td>
<td>(Jan 2002-Nov 2006) &lt; 48h 0.2 mg/kg then 0.1 mg/kg for 2 doses, 2-7days 0.2 mg/kg for 3 doses, &gt; 7 days 0.25 mg/kg for 3 doses 12 h intervals</td>
<td>Successful medical closure similar regardless of direction of flow across the PDA (bidirectional 68% vs left to right 63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adouche-Amri et al., 2012, US</td>
<td>I v 10 mg/kg and 5 mg/kg after 24-48 h</td>
<td>0.2 mg/kg every 12 h for 3 doses</td>
<td>32.5% infants closed PDA after 1° course, 20% after 2° course, 7% after 3° course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REFERENCES


ABS 21

FAST RECOVERY FOLLOWING SEVERE ACETAMINOPHEN-INDUCED LIVER DISEASE IN A NEWBORN: A CASE REPORT

A.P. Pinna1, S. Nemolato2, D. Fanni2, M. Furno1, M.A. Marcialis1, A. Dessi3, T. Cabras4, G. Faa5, I. Messana1, M. Castagnola1, A.M. Nurchi1

Department of Surgical Science, ‘Section of Pediatric Clinic,’ Section of Pathology, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy

BACKGROUND

Acetaminophen is one of the most common causes of drug-induced hepatic toxicity in children. It has been reported to be the most common cause of acute liver failure in children, accounting for 15% of all drug-induced acute hepatitis.

Patients and methods. Here we report a case of acetaminophen-related acute hepatitis in a newborn, with some peculiar features, mainly related to the ability of the young patient to recover from a severe acute liver disease.

RESULTS

A 1 month old baby presented at our Paediatric Unit with a story of 3 days of fever treated for ten days with high doses of acetaminophen (125 mg/3 times a day) and antibiotic therapy. Laboratory tests showed important changes in coagulation in particular a growth of PT INR and PTT and a decrease of fibrinogen. Hepatic functionality was compromised with a rapid increase of cytolytic indexes (ALT: 2,600 U/L; N.V. < 40 U/L). Viral markers, metabolic indexes and urinary organic acid were costantly negative. At 24 hours after the acetaminophen suspension, a suddenly decrease of serum levels of transaminases along with an increase of hepatic functionality...
tests was observed. After 72 hours, the hepatic functionality and the parameters of coagulation were in the normal range.

CONCLUSIONS

The case here reported shows some peculiar features, that deserve some consideration. It is one of the rare cases of severe acute liver necrosis caused by acetaminophen reported in a newborn, being acetaminophen-related liver toxicity relatively rare in the perinatal period. In spite of this dramatic clinical picture, discontinuation of acetaminophen resulted in a extremely fast recovery, ALT levels decreasing toward normal values within 3 days from the diagnosis. These data confirm the hypothesis that acetaminophen metabolism is different in newborns as compared to adult subjects, and reinforce the hypothesis that the newborn liver has the ability to undergo a fast recovery after a massive liver cell necrosis.

ABS 22

IMMUNOREACTIVITY FOR S100B: A NEW MARKER OF HYPOXIA-RELATED CARDIAC DAMAGE IN NEWBORN PIGLETS

A. Faa¹, T.P. Xanthos², F. Aroni², A. Papalois³, G. Palmas², R. Carboni⁴, E. Puxeddu¹, A. Locci¹, P. Pampaloni¹, E. Di Felice¹, M.E. Pais¹, N. Iacovidou²

Department of Surgical Sciences, ¹Section of Pathology, ²Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Pauciculture Institute and Neonatal Section, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy
³National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Medical School, Greece
⁴ELPEN Research-Experimental Centre, Athens, Greece

AIM OF THE STUDY

This study was aimed at evaluating the expression of S100B protein in the heart of an experimental animal model of neonatal hypoxia and reoxygenation.

METHODS

To this end, normocapnic hypoxia was induced in 40 male Landrace/Large White neonatal piglets by decreasing the inspired oxygen to 6-8%. When animals developed bradycardia or severe hypotension, reoxygenation was initiated. Piglets were allocated in four groups of 10, according to the oxygen concentration they were reoxygenated with: group 1, 2, 3, and 4, received 18%, 21%, 40% and 100% oxygen, respectively. The animals were further classified into 4 groups according with the time required for reoxygenation: group A (< 15 min); group B (16-60 min); group C (> 60 min); group D (deceased animals).

RESULTS

Immunostaining for S100B protein was detected in 14 out of 40 heart samples (35%), both inside the cytoplasm of cardiomyocytes and as globular deposits in the interstitial spaces. Significant differences were observed among groups 1-4 regarding S100B expression. Reactivity for S100B in cardiac cells was detected in 50% of group 1 and 2 animals, in 10% of group 3 and in 30% of group 4 piglets. Marked differences were also observed among groups A-D: the percentage of newborn piglets showing reactivity for S100B in the heart was 75% in group A, 33% in group B, 12% in group C and 22% in group D.

CONCLUSIONS

Our study shows that S100B protein storage occurs in the heart of a percentage of newborn piglets following severe hypoxia. S100B storage in cardiomyocytes correlates with the different oxygen therapeutic regimen utilized during reoxygenation, being higher in piglets reoxygenated with room air (18 and 21%), and lower in animals reoxygenated with 40% oxygen. Intermediate levels of S100B expression were found in 100% O₂ treated animals. The finding of a higher percentage of S100-immunoreactive hearts in piglets with a fast recovery and the detection of a decreased reactivity in animals with a slow and a very slow recovery clearly indicate S100B protein as an early protective factor with a positive prognostic value in asphyxiated newborn piglets.

ABS 23

COPING AND PARENTAL ROLE COMPETENCE OF MOTHERS OF THE PRETERM INFANT


Department of Psychology, Research Unit of “Pediatric Psychology”, University of Palermo, Italy

BACKGROUND

The study explores possible significant statistical differences about coping strategies and self-perceived parental competence, in mothers of preterm children, in reference to the level of gravity of preterm birth.

METHODS

The study involved a group of 16 mothers of moderately preterm children (weeks’ gestational
The study was involved a group of 55 healthy preterm children (35 moderately preterm children and 20 severely preterm children) at mean age of 5.2 attending the third year of infancy school; a group of 55 mothers; a group of 15 paediatricians; a group of 5 neonatologists and one of 10 teachers. Specific questionnaires (IPDAG, IPDDAI) have been administered to parents and teachers, before and after the training sessions. Also, the trainer has used techniques of narrative (the critical incident technique) and descriptive (encoding scheme) observation. A check-list to detect the participation of adults has been used. A telephone follow-up has been performed to detect the involved adults’ considerations about the stability of promoted changes.

RESULTS
The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (analysis of the visual trend of change) and a repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) to assess the statistically significant differences in the attention and self-regulation performances of preterm children, before and after the rehabilitative training. The data show a statistically significant decrease in both the processes of inattention and self-regulation of hyperactivity and impulsivity.

CONCLUSIONS
Data highlight show good levels of sustainability of the proposed training.
leading to the coordinate development of oocytes, endothelial and stromal cell types within the ovarian architectural complexity. Since few histological and immunohistochemical studies are available on the newborn ovary, particularly in preterm infants, this study was aimed at evaluating ovary differentiation in human fetuses and newborns ranging from 12 up to 40 weeks of gestation.

**DESIGN**

12 ovaries, obtained for legal interruption of pregnancy or at autopsy, were formalin-fixed and paraffin-embedded. Paraffin sections were stained with H&E. For each organ the mitotic index (no. of mitotic figures per 5 high power fields) and the apoptotic index (no. of apoptotic globules per 5 high power fields) were evaluated. Moreover the number of primordial follicles (oocytes surrounded by a single layer of flat pregranulosa cells) per 5 high power fields was obtained.

**RESULTS**

The follicle count evidenced a peak in follicle development around the 23rd week of gestation (see **Fig. 1**). As expected, the number of mitotic figures was higher in the earlier weeks of gestation up to 16th week (ranging from 14 to 20 mitotic figures/5HPF) corresponding to the great proliferative potential of primordial germ cells and oogonia (see **Fig. 2**). On the contrary, apoptotic rate was very low in the same period. After week 20 of gestation, as differentiation of primordial follicles begins, mitotic and apoptotic count trends cross and overlap accounting for interindividual variability of the number of follicles (see **Fig. 3**).

**CONCLUSIONS**

Our data show that ovary differentiation and in particular oocyte burden is not strictly related to gestational age of fetuses and newborns. We hypothesize that, given a similar follicle count, a higher mitotic or apoptotic rate could possibly reflect a trend for following development of oocytes until birth. Fetal environment regulates ovarian development and depends on multiple maternal, nutritional, genetic and molecular variables. Interactions of these complex pathways might determine quantity and quality of oocytes at birth and eventually predict adult life fertility. Further studies are needed in order to better understand these mechanisms that may be at the basis of female infertility.

**ABS 26**

**UNDIFFERENTIATED NEUROBLASTOMA WITH DISTANT METASTASES AT BIRTH: A CASE REPORT**

P. Bianco¹, M. Puddu², C. Gerosa¹, M. Testa², D. Fanni¹, F. Lai¹, G. Senes¹, E. Di Felice¹, A. Ravarino¹

¹Department of Pathology, ²Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section, University of Cagliari, Italy
BACKGROUND
Neuroblastoma is the most common malignant tumor of the newborn, representing one-third of all malignancies diagnosed in the neonatal period, 8% being described within the first month of life. Congenital neuroblastoma is mainly localized in the adrenal or extra-adrenal sympathetic structures. It has a very different behavior as compared to neuroblastoma encountered in older infants and children. Even though fifty-percent of perinatal cases show distant metastases at presentation, they have the capacity to regress spontaneously or to differentiate completely and, in general, carry a good prognosis. Here we report a case of congenital neuroblastoma with an aggressive outcome in a full-term newborn.

DESIGN
Clinical manifestation at birth was characterized by a hypothalamic deficit, an insufficient respiratory and cardiovascular activity, and a decline of renal and hepatic function. CT scan was performed, revealing a suggestive neuroimaging pattern of paravertebral neuroblastoma. The clinical course was rapidly worsening with a 12 days survival time. Results: At autopsy we observed an extensive paravertebral mass, 5 cm in size, in the thoracic cavity with mediastinic dislocation and without any involvement of the spinal cord. At macroscopic examination the tumor was multilobulated, with a soft consistence and a gray-pink color and it showed, at cut, a nodular appearance with areas of hemorrhage, calcification and intratumoral necrosis. The liver was increased in size, with multiple white micronodules on the surface. At histological examination the tumor was composed of sheets of small to medium-sized cells with a scant cytoplasm and indistinct cytoplasmic borders. Nuclei were round to ovoid with coarsely granular (salt and pepper) chromatin and indistinct nucleoli (Fig. 1). There were thin fibrovascular septa between groups of tumor cells and undifferentiated neuroblasts, in the absence of neuropil.

At immunohistochemistry, tumor cells showed the following phenotype: NSE + (Fig. 2), Synaptophysin +, S100 -, Chromogranin A -, Vimentin -, EMA -, Nestin -, Ki67 > 20%.

Metastases were found in liver, pancreas, lungs, adrenal glands and bone marrow.

CONCLUSIONS
Histological and immunohistochemical findings fulfill the diagnosis of undifferentiated neuroblastoma. The negativity for nestin immunoreactivity in tumor cells, paralleled by immunoreactivity for NSE and Synaptophysin, suggests the absence of neuropil and of maturing neuroblasts, leading to the diagnosis of an undifferentiated form of this neoplasm. Further studies are needed to better understand the correlation between the undifferentiated form of neuroblastoma and a clinical aggressiveness of this tumor.

ABS 27

CHLORAMPHENICOL (ChA) TOXICITY IN THE NEWBORN INFANT: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

L. Cataldi1,4,5, D. Buonsenso1, G. Meli2, M.G. Gregorio3,4,5
BACKGROUND
In the ’40s of the last century chloramphenicol (Chl) was originally described by Erlich et al.; it was called chloromycetin. Usually this drug was orally administered, rapidly absorbed from the gastrointestinal tract, thus needing frequent administration. Chl has a fairly wide distribution throughout body tissue. It is mainly excreted by the kidney as a nitrocompound previously inactivated by the liver. This drug was widely used in the past in term and preterm newborn infants.

GOAL
To remind to neonatologists the importance of the Chl toxicity used in the newborn infants, mainly in the preterm babies, as a suggestion for prevention of any drug’s toxicity accident.

METHODS
A research about “Chloramphenicol” and “Toxicity” on Pub Med and in a lot of books published in the second half of the XXth century was performed.

RESULTS
In 1959 the grey baby syndrome was reported in association with the use of the antibiotic Chl. Infants developed abdominal distension, vomiting, cyanosis, cardiovascular collapse, irregular respiration and subsequent death shortly after therapy with chloramphenicol was started. Pharmacokinetic studies in the neonate showed accumulation of chloramphenicol in plasma due to impaired drug metabolism. A reduction of the total daily dosage from 100 to 50 mg/kg prevented the development of the grey baby syndrome.

CONCLUSION
Authors suggest a better understanding of neonatal physiology, and of developmental changes in drug disposition and metabolism, in order to obtain appropriate and more useful formulations for drug treatment in the neonatal period, mainly for safety.

ABS 28

BRONCHIOLITIS IN NEWBORNS

M. Furno¹, D. Congiu¹, F. Carta¹, R. Bergamaschi², R. Minelli¹

Bronchiolitis is a common paediatric illness, especially under 1 year of age. This disease is typically benign, but in infants younger than 6 months or with underlying risk factors it could be associated also with death.

We considered all the children with bronchiolitis hospitalized between 18 November 2009 and 4 April 2011 in the Paediatric Department of Sant’Orsola-Malpighi, Bologna, to describe the proceedings done and to compare them to scientific evidence. Following guidelines, we excluded more fragile babies.

We found 14 children under 1 month of age in 168 hospitalizations (8.33%). There was male predominance (10 vs. 4; 71.43% vs. 28.57%). In Emergency Room (ER), 10 patients had respiratory distress (71.43%), 5 (35.71%) had oxygen saturation less than 95%. The code was yellow for 9 babies (64.29%) and green for others 5 (35.71%). Chest radiography was performed in ER to 10 babies (71.43%) and to 3 of them (21.43%) were given oxygen. C-reactive protein was positive in 3 patients (21.43%). During hospitalization, 6 babies underwent chest x-ray (42.86%). In the same context patients carried out: physiologic solution aerosol (9 babies, 64.29%), oxygen (8 patients, 57.14%), epinephrine aerosol (13 patients, 92.86%), beta-2 agonists aerosol (1 baby, 7.14%), oral corticosteroids (9 patients, 64.29%), antibiotics (7 patients, 50%), intravenous fluids (10 patients, 71.43%) and nasal washing (10 babies, 71.43%). The mean period of hospitalization was 6.43 days, ranging from 3 to 10 days. Maybe fewer babies needed hospitalization and the colour code of triage in ER didn’t reflect this necessity; only 8 patients have received oxygen therapy and we report 1 infant only treated with physiologic solution aerosol and nasal washing. There are many reasons to hospitalize newborns with bronchiolitis, but we have to consider also negative effects. All infants underwent at least 1 x-ray in hospital or after discharge from it; 4 (28.57%) babies performed 2 radiographies. We think there is an abuse of this diagnostic method, because bronchiolitis has clinical diagnosis.

We emphasize the need for proper hospitalizations for bronchiolitis-affected babies and conscious use of drugs in order to protect them. We remind also the careful use of x-ray.
WOMAN AFTER STILLBIRTH

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION IN A HIGH-RISK WOMAN AFTER STILLBIRTH

T. Fanos

Department of Psychiatrics, Azienda Carlo Poma, Mantua, Italy

BACKGROUND

Postpartum depression (PPD) is a non-psychotic depressive disease with varying severity, from moderate to severe, which according to the DSM IV originates after the 4th to 6th week from giving birth. The most frequent symptoms of PPD are as follows: moodiness, excessive concern about the wellbeing of the neonate. Co-morbidity is frequent with serious anxiety and attacks of panic.

CASE REPORT

R. is 31 years woman suffering for attacks of panic, under treatment with paroxetine (20 mg/day) and alprazolam (0.50 mg x 3/day). After various attempts to become pregnant R. makes a choice for an assisted fecundation. The pharmacologic treatment is progressively reduced to avoid drugs exposure in the first trimester of pregnancy. However psicotherapy alone is not enough and drugs are needed again after the first month of pregnancy. R. is informed of the potential toxicity of the treatment, including teratogenic effects and long term cognitive and behavioural long term alterations. After counseling the choice is made to paroxetine (20 mg/day), which presents no more malformative risks for fetuses when compared to controls: SSRI are considered the first choice in case of attacks of panic and depression during pregnancy. The drugs ensures some periods of well-being during the second and third trimester. However towards the end of gestation R. is very stressed and insists for anticipation of parturition with a planned caesarean section (CS). One week before the programmed day, R. insists again in the request of immediate CS, obtaining the positive answer by her obstetrician. However, the ultrasounds reveal a dead fetus. R. knows this situation and gives birth to a dead newborn. After delivery R. wants to hug her child for some minutes, takes some pictures and decides to personally organize his funeral. Actually R. continues treatment with paroxetine and alprazolam.

COMMENT

Loosing a child during gestation is peculiar event with specific psychodynamic implications, including deep wound of self-esteem and self-image. It is a mourning projected into the future (unmet wishes, hopes, fantasies). Many women find again a well-being after a new pregnancy with positive outcome. It is extremely important for physicians offering to the mother a space of Narrative Based Medicine of the experience, allowing a conscious elaboration. Again the empathic hearing is normally underestimated by perinatologists. Relatives and friends improperly believe that it is important to forget the event and to compensate with a new pregnancy. On the contrary, the mothers tends to collect things and material that favour the memory of the dead child. We described a typical case of severe post partum depression, anticipated by a pregress attacks of panic and complicated by a stillborn. In most of cases the history of the woman is more subtle and an active approach is mandatory to early diagnosis of post partum depression and to prevent its dramatic effects.

REFERENCES


NEONATAL BRAIN HYPOTERMIA: THE CAGLIARI EXPERIENCE

G. Secchi1, D. Pruna2, F. Birocchi1, D. Gariel1, M.A. Marcialis1, V. Marinelli1, I. Murgianu1, B. Pinna1, M.C. Pintus1, M. Puddu1, A. Reali2, L. Ruggeri1, M. Testa1, V. Zurrida1, G. Palmas1

1Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Paucriculture Institute and Neonatal Section, and 2Department of Pediatric Neuropsychiatry, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy

BACKGROUND

The hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy it is one of the most common causes of cerebral palsy, its effect is 1.6% live births. In serious forms mortality can reach 60% and the neurological
sequelae present in 1 out of 4 of surviving children. Hypothermia is currently the treatment of choice for moderate-severe encephalopathy, being capable of reducing the vasogenic edema, the release of excitatory neurotransmitters of free radicals of oxygen, the activation of cytokines and the brain metabolism.

**AIM**
To describe the clinical experience with hypothermia in the Cagliari NICU during the period July 2010-July 2012.

**METHODS**
The treatment was started when the asphyxiated born children presented the inclusion criteria proposed by the group of the Italian Society of Neonatology: Apgar score < 5 at 10 minutes of live, pH < 7 or EB > 16 or presence of neurological signs of suffering severe or moderate (Sarnat&Sarnat), or altered CFM. The target of therapy was a rectal temperature of 33.5 degrees for 72 hours, followed by slow heating (0.5/hour). In our NICU the used method is the selective hypothermia (Cool-Cap).

**RESULTS**
Eleven newborns were treated with hypothermia. Two of them died on the second day of life: they were born at term by emergency caesarean section, for severe fetal distress and placental abruption, respectively. At admission in the NICU the first presented hypotonia and seizures, the second convulsions and coma. Both had started treatment hypothermic before the sixth hour of life. The track CFM was severely impaired only in the second patient, so as the cerebral ultrasound, while in the first there was only diffuse cerebral oedema.

In the nine surviving children, all born at term of gestation except one with GA 36 wks, the mean birthweight was 3,320 g (2,610-3,950), the mean Apgar score was of 1.7 at 1 minute and 3.6 at 5 minutes, the average pH at the entrance was 7.03 and the EB was -15. The hypothermic treatment started on average age of 4.02 hours of birth, the CFM trace was severely pathological in 3 cases (33%) and only moderately compromised in 4 (44%). The EEG examination resulted pathological in 7 (77%) of the nine children tested. The cerebral ultrasonography showed severe injury in 4 children and mild in 2. The MRI reported severe brain injury in 4 cases and only mild in other 2. The follow-up of children (minimal age: 9 months) shows a picture of normality only in 2 cases, 4 require a rehabilitation treatment for severe psychomotor alteration, 2 are under anticonvulsant treatment.

**CONCLUSIONS**
Our series, although numerically small, confirms the literature data on the results of brain cooling: it is effective only if it is early applied and only if brain injury is not too much serious.

A take-home message is that 1st and 2nd level centers must send asphyxiated newborns as early as possible to the 3rd level NICU, with special care to neuroprotection during the transport.

**ABS 31**

**DINO GABURRO: A MASTER OF PEDIATRICS**

L. Cataldi

Institute of Pediatrics, Catholic University School of Sacred Heart, Rome, Italy;
Study Group of History of Neonatology, the Italian Society of Neonatology

Dino Gaburro (Fig. 1) was born in Castelnuovo del Garda (Verona, Italy) in 1923; he graduated (1948) and obtained his residency in Pediatrics (1950) at the University of Padua. He performed the first investigations in the Padua University on pediatric and neonatal nutrition with the world famous Prof.
Giancarlo Bentivoglio (the “Bentivoglio rule” for diluting and enriching cow milk for infant nutrition). In 1963 Dr Gaburro obtained a Chair of “Puériculture” in the Ferrara University School of Medicine and after few years the Medical Faculty called him to be chairman of the Pediatric Institute and of the Dept of Pediatrics, performing a very high level clinical activity.

Prof. Gaburro was an excellent investigator performing many important research program on carbohydrate metabolism in thymectomized rats, and on exocrine pancreas function in premature and full term neonates.

In 1970 Prof. Gaburro moved to the Verona University where he was able to founding and organizing the Pediatric University Service: he was Director during 25 years (1970-1995) improving his own Academic impact.

He was elected president of the Italian Society of Social and Preventive Pediatrics (1978-81) and in 1982 he was elected President of the Italian Society of Pediatrics (1982-1985).

In order to organize the best care to premature infants Gaburro sent doctor Paolo Pizzo in Paris (to learn neonatal infantile care, at the Institut de Puériculture, Prof. Lelong and Rossier), doctor Giuseppe Zoppi in Zurich (in the Department of Pediatrics of Prof. Prader) in order to be educated in nutrition of newborn infant and to be able to improve the neonatal growth.

He created a school of Pediatrics, which generated several Professors of Pediatrics and Directors of University Pediatric Departments (Prof. Luciano Tatò, Pediatric Endocrinologist who succeeded him as Director at University of Verona and Prof. Attilio Boner, Pediatric Allergologist who is now Director at the same university), Directors of Hospital Pediatric Departments and Family Pediatricians. One of the lessons of this great open mind Master is that scientific knowledge by itself is not enough for a good Pediatrician, but it must be associated with deep clinical experience and great attention to the child and the parents.

**ABS 32**

**THE STERILE VESICOUРЕTERAL REFUX AS A CAUSE OF CONGENITAL RENAL HYPODYSPLASIA**

G. Ottonello, A. Dessì, R. Carboni, A. Melis, R. Irma, E. Coni, M. Balzarini, I. Follesa, M. Boero, G. Masnata

**INTRODUCTION**

The intrarenal reflux of infected urine may determine (if not properly and quickly treated) the occurrence of renal scarring and it was considered the only cause of reflux nephropathy in the past. Currently also the sterile intrarenal reflux is considered to be a factor in chronic renal disease, can develop renal hypodysplasia during intrauterine life.

We report the clinical case of a newborn in which there is a presence of ultrasound renal hypodysplasia without the patient ever suffered from previous episodes of fever or pyelonephritis. In the subsequent urology follow-up was diagnosed in the kidney affected an high grade of vesicoureteral reflux (VUR), and in scintigraphic examination, a major functional deficit.

**CASE REPORT**

A male newborn of 20 days old comes to our attention for fever (39°C), in the absence of other clinical signs of significant physical examination. No history of previous episodes of fever. Laboratory and instrumental examinations: WBC 9,000 with relative lymphocytosis, CRP and PCT negative, e.g. urine sediment and urine culture negative; BUN mg/dl, creatinine 0.6 mg/dl, blood culture negative. Renal-bladder ultrasound shows: “ureterohydronephrosis of the left kidney (2nd, 3rd grade according to the classification of the “Society for Fetal Urology”), small parenchymal (3rd centile for age) with poor corticomedullary differentiation, right kidney size increased (90th centile for age), with hypertrophic vicarious aspect”. The patient, after 5 days of intermittent fever presents, in conjunction with the resolution febrile, a widespread rash of the body. Following hospital discharge with a diagnosis of “exanthem subitum.” Included in a follow-up urology, a cystourethrography showed an RVU of 4th-5th grade in the left kidney, while scintigraphy demonstrated renal secretion by 80% right and 20% left.

**DISCUSSION**

The “Big bang theory” of Ramsley and Ridson [1] (which gave prominence to the dramatic effect of the initial infection induce more renal scarring), has been considered for years can explain a reflux nephropathy. Currently it is estimated that a sterile VUR can cause congenital renal hypodysplasia in 29-50% of cases [2].
Several hypotheses, such as the production of high pressures intratubular fetal factors inducing interstitial fibrosis and renal dysplasia (Angiotensin, TGF, PDGF) or abnormal embryonic development of the ureteric bud, may explain the occurrence of a congenital renal hypoplasia regardless from any infectious factor acquisition.

CONCLUSIONS

We reported a case report of an infant with congenital nephropathy sterile VUR. The evidence that a large part of renal disease by VUR is congenital and not post-infectious (at least in males) and the knowledge that no post-natal medical intervention can influence the clinical course, is changing the diagnostic-therapeutic-prophylactic outlook currently used for the treatment of this important disease.

REFERENCES


ABS 33

INTRAPARTUM ANTIBIOTIC PROPHYLAXIS IN GBS-POSITIVE MOTHERS: EFFECTS ON NEWBORN MICROBIOTA

L. Corvaglia1, E. Legnani1, S. Martini1, M. Oss1, D. Di Gioia2, I. Aloisio2, B. Biavati2, G. Faldella1

1Neonatal Intensive Care and Neonatology Unit, Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria Sant'Orsola-Malpighi, Bologna, Italy
2Department of Science and Environmental Technologies – Mirobiologic Area, University of Bologna, Italy

BACKGROUND AND AIMS

Group B Streptococcus (GBS) early-onset sepsis represents an important cause of neonatal morbidity and mortality; however, the introduction of maternal intrapartum antibiotic prophylaxis during labor and delivery has led to a decline of the related death rates. Current literature lacks information about the effects of antibiotic prophylaxis on early bacterial colonization of the newborn gut, which is known to be related to immunity development.

The aim of this study is to evaluate the effect of antibiotic treatment of pregnant GBS-positive women on early bacterial colonization of the newborn gut.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Thirty-four newborns born by natural delivery and breastfed were enrolled; 17 had mothers GBS-positive treated with 2 g of Ampicillin, 17 had GBS-negative mothers (control group). Two-hundred milligram faeces were collected for each subject and processed for DNA extractions with QIAamp DNA Stool Mini-Kit. The quantification of principal groups of newborn gut microbiota (Lactobacillus spp., Bifidobacterium spp., B. fragilis group, C. difficile, E. coli) was carried out with real-time PCR. Data of microbial counts were subjected to one-way variance analysis, to detect significant differences between treated and control group.

RESULTS

Antibiotic therapy reduced Bifidobacterium spp. intestinal colonization [5.51 Log(CFU/g) in treated samples again 7.07 Log(CFU/g) in control samples, p < 0.05], while no variation was observed in the number of Lactobacillus spp., C. difficile and E. coli.

CONCLUSIONS

Our preliminary results showed a significant decrease of early Bifidobacterium count in treated newborns microbiota; clinical meanings or possible effects on immunity need to be investigated with larger studies.

ABS 34

MOTHER’S EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE AFTER GIVING BIRTH TO A PRETERM INFANT

P. Paladini1, A. Frisenna2, O. De Pascali3, A. Paladini4

1NICU and Neonatology Division, Hospital “V. Fazzi”, Lecce, Italy
2Psychologist-Psychotherapist, Ass. L’Abbraccio Onlus, Lecce, Italy
3Psychologist-Psychotherapist, Italy
4Campus Bio Medico University, Rome, Italy

AIM

Aim of the present research is to investigate the presence of emotional disorders (anxiety and depression) in two groups of mothers of premature children. The first group is formed by mother of premature children without serious pathologies, and the second group is formed by mother of premature children with serious pathologies.

HYPOTHESIS OF RESEARCH

The authors want to put in evidence if there are important differences between the two groups about the presence of emotional disorders concerning the anxious-depressive problem.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The sample investigation for each groups of research is formed by 30 mothers of premature children patients in NICU of the hospital “V. Fazzi”...
of Lecce, total 60 subjects. The premature children present: an average pregnancy age of 30 weeks (25-34), average weight at the birth 1,435 g (920-1,950), average stay in hospital about 60 days.

Instruments of the research are: a multi-explorative questionnaire, containing personal data and clinic information of the mother and of the newborn, that investigates about prevalent emotional and clinic experiences (medical problems, food disorders, family life) and the Simpton Check List-90 (SCL-90) that gives the possibility to measure the frequency and the intensity of somatic and psychic disorders of the persons of the sample.

In a period of five months we have analyzed 24 mothers of premature children without serious pathologies and 18 mothers of premature children with serious pathologies.

RESULTS
The questionnaire demonstrated that the mothers with serious pathologies present superior values for frequency and intensity in the scale relative to anxiety and depression (SCL-90) compared to the mothers of the premature children without serious pathologies. Moreover in the mothers of premature children without serious pathologies the prevalent feelings are sadness and guilty, while in the second group to those emotions you have to add a strong auger respect to the traumatic event suffered.

ABS 35

EFFECTS OF BOLUS FEEDING VS. CONTINUOUS FEEDING ON SPLANCHNIC TISSUE OXYGENATION, CEREBRAL TISSUE OXYGENATION AND APNOEIC EPISODES IN PRETERM INFANTS

L. Corvaglia, S. Martini, E. Legnani, B. Battistini, M. Oss, A. Aceti, G. Faldella

Department of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and Neonatology, Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria Sant’Orsola-Malpighi, Bologna, Italy

BACKGROUND AND AIMS
Tube feeding, either continuous or through intermittent boluses, is a common practice in Neonatal Intensive Care Units, due to the inability of preterm infants to coordinate sucking, swallowing and breathing; however, at present there is no clear evidence if either feeding method is better tolerated. The primary aim of our study was to evaluate and compare cerebral and splanchnic oxygenation trends occurring after bolus and during continuous feeding in stable preterm infants using Near Infrared Reflected Spectroscopy (NIRS), a non-invasive technique of tissue oxygenation monitoring. Moreover, we aimed to compare the frequency of apnoic episodes detected with polysomnography between the two enteral feeding techniques.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Eighteen healthy preterm infants with a median GA of 31 weeks underwent a 6-hour NIRS monitoring of cerebral and splanchnic oxygenation, simultaneous to a polysomnographic recording of total (TA), obstructive (OA), central (CA) and mixed (MA) apnoea episodes. During the monitoring each baby was fed twice through a nasogastric tube: one meal was given continuously over 3 hours, the other as a 10 minutes bolus. Recorded values of cerebral and splanchnic oxygenation, clustered in 5-minutes intervals, and the number of TA, OA, CA and MA were compared between the two techniques using Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test. Statistical significance was set at p ≤ 0.05.

RESULTS
Splanchnic oxygenation significantly decreased (p ≤ 0.05) during continuous feeding, from 1 h 25’ to 2 h 25’ after the beginning of feeding administration. No differences between the two techniques were found on cerebral oxygenation and in the number of total, obstructive, central and mixed apnoea episodes detected.

CONCLUSIONS
To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study comparing the effects of different feeding techniques on splanchnic and cerebral oxygenation in preterm infants. Splanchnic oxygenation was significantly lower during continuous feeding than after bolus; further studies are needed to possible physiological mechanisms or long-term effects on mesenteric perfusion.

ABS 36

NATAL AND NEONATAL TEETH: SOME NEW EXPERIENCES

F. Tromba1, B. Baranello2

1Chair of Pediatrics, Odontostomatology Faculty, PD-UCSC, Rome, Italy
2Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and Neonatology “A. Cardarelli” Hospital, Campobasso, Italy

BACKGROUND
If primary teeth erupt during the third to the fifth month of life, this is termed precocious dentition. Such cases involve premature eruption of normal primary
teeth. Teeth erupted at a much earlier age or present at birth have been called fetal, congenital but since 1963 they are called “natal teeth” if they are present at birth and “neonatal teeth” if they erupt during the neonatal period.

In the time, because of the rare occurrence of natal teeth, the phenomenon has been associated with superstition. Natal or neonatal teeth occur with approximately equal frequency among boys and girls (about 1:2,000, 1:3,000).

GOALS
1. To review the epidemiology, etiology, clinical presentation, complications and management of natal teeth.
2. To refer the author’s experience or congenital teeth.

METHODS

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS
Natal teeth might resemble normal primary dentition in size and shape, but they are often smaller, conical and yellowish, and have hypoplastic enamel and dentin with poor or absent root formation.

Most natal teeth are mobile. Complications include discomfort during suckling, sublingual ulceration, laceration of the mother’s breasts and aspiration of the teeth. A dental roentgenogram is tooth extraction is indicated if the tooth is supernumerary or excessively mobile. indicated to differentiate the premature eruption of a primary tooth from a supernumerary tooth. Etiology is unknown.

Three syndromes have been associated with natal teeth: Ellis-van Creveld s., Hallermann-Streiff s., and Jadassohn-Lewandowski syndrome.

Over 4 years (Jan. 2008-Dec. 2011) in a 2nd level maternity ward 4,697 newborn baby were delivered and 3 newborn having natal teeth were observed (1:1,586).

Natal teeth may also be associated with cleft lip, cleft palate and other anomalies. Histologic investigation has revealed a failure of root formation despite eruption, a large vascular pulp, irregular genesis.

If the tooth does not interfere with breastfeeding and is otherwise asymptomatic, no treatment is necessary. The authors confirm the usefulness of this preliminary contribute: they suggest other larger study should be performed.

ABS 37

INTEGRATION BETWEEN MEDICAL AND NURSING CHARTS AS A TOOL FOR QUALITY

IMPROVEMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT IN NICU


Department of Medical and Surgical Neonatology, Bambino Gesù Children’s Hospital – IRCCS, Rome, Italy

BACKGROUND
Clinical documentation is a fundamental tool to get International Standard in terms of patient safety in NICU. Bambino Gesù Children’s Hospital obtained for the first time the accreditation by Joint Commission International (JCI) in 2006 within the project of the continuous improving in quality of care. Before 2006 the clinical charts were lacking in nursing information, intervention plans, pain and adverse events monitoring. The prescription of therapy was reported in different sheets with consequent high risk for medical and nursing errors and adverse events. After JCI accreditation an integrated nursing and medical documentation was designed and applied, looking specifically at the planning of the procedures and at the individualization of care based on specific patient needs. All these aspects have to be reported and well documented in the patient chart.

AIMS AN METHODS
Evaluation of adverse events during the last 18 months in the Department of Medical and Surgical Neonatology (DNMC), through a voluntary communication of adverse events, near miss, or severe events.

RESULTS
In the last 18 months 1,005 patients have been discharged by the DNMC. Forty-four adverse events have been documented, of these 8 were near miss events, 36 were adverse events. Eight of these had moderate-severe consequences. The most frequent events (19/44) were therapeutic ones, of whom 16 (84.2%) were due to wrong prescription, that is by far the most risky phase.

Following this analysis a new medical-nursing team organization has been developed with the aim of sharing and optimizing the clinical care for sick newborns and reducing the risk for therapeutic adverse events.

CONCLUSIONS
Adverse events and medical errors are relatively frequent in NICU and most of them are related to therapy. The weakest phase seems to be drug prescription followed by administration. In both
cases, the impact of an organization based on an unique medical-nursing team supported by a culture of a continuous improving in health quality is the fundamental instrument to reduce the risks for patients, family and caregivers.

ABS 38

CD44 IMMUNOREACTIVITY IN DIABETIC NEPHROPATHY AND THE DEVELOPING HUMAN KIDNEY: A MARKER OF RENAL PROGENITOR STEM CELLS

G. Locci, C. Gerosa, A. Ravarino, G. Senes, D. Fanni

Department of Pathology, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy

BACKGROUND

CD44 is a transmembrane adhesion glycoprotein, which functions as a hyaluronan receptor and participates in the uptake and degradation of hyaluronan [1,2]. It is expressed in a wide variety of cell types; recently, CD44 has been proposed in the adult kidney as a marker of activated glomerular parietal epithelial cells, the putative niche stem cells that, in case of damage to podocytes, might migrate inside the glomerular tuft and undergo transition to podocytes [3]. The aim of this study is to investigate CD44 immunoreactivity in a case of diabetic nephropathy compared with nephrogenesis.

DESIGN

The expression of CD44 was evaluated in kidneys of a 67-year-old diabetic woman and 4 human fetuses, ranging from 11 to 30 weeks of gestation obtained at autopsy, 10% buffered formalin fixed, routinely processed and paraffin-embedded. Immunohistochemical staining were performed using antibodies against CD44 (clone HCAM) on 4 μ-thick sections, incubated for 30 minutes at room temperature with a 1:50 dilution of the polyclonal anti CD44 primary antibody.

RESULTS

Immunoreactive cells for CD44 were detected either in the diabetic adult and in the fetal kidneys studied in the present work. In the diabetic adult kidney, CD44 reactivity was observed in the tubules and in the glomerular parietal epithelial cells (Fig. 1). In the fetal kidneys, CD44 was detected in glomeruli, in isolated cells, located inside the immature glomerular tuft, sometimes giving rise to small clusters, and in isolated large cells inside the metanephric mesenchyme surrounding the newly formed renal vesicle (Fig. 2), but not in the tubules.

CONCLUSIONS

CD44 reactivity was detected either in glomerular parietal epithelial cells in the case of diabetic nephropathy and in different cells involved in nephrogenesis in the fetal kidneys. In both situations CD44 probably marked a subset of progenitor/stem cells and/or putative niche stem cells involved either in early phases of kidney development and in repairing podocytes damage. Further studies are need in order to better understand the putative role of the CD44-positive cells both in nephrogenesis and in podocytopathies.

REFERENCES


ABS 39

PAS AND WEIGERT METHODS: TWO OLD STAINS FOR A NEW INTERPRETATION OF THE NEWBORN KIDNEY

Department of Pathology, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy

BACKGROUND
Histology has been abandoned or scarcely utilized in recent years for the interpretation of human kidney samples, including the analysis of the developing kidney, being substituted by immunohistochemistry and electron microscopy. Here we report our preliminary data on the usefulness of two old histochemical methods, PAS-stain for glycogen and Weigert stain for elastic fibers, in the study of the neonatal kidney.

DESIGN
10 well preserved kidney samples, obtained at autopsy from newborns ranging in gestational age from 26 up to 38 weeks were formalin-fixed, routinely processed and paraffin-embedded. Serial paraffin sections were stained with E-E, PAS stain and Weigert methods.

RESULTS
The study of renal sections stained with the PAS method, first evidenced the inability of this method to mark the glomerular basal membrane in the majority of kidneys, particularly in very preterm infants. On the contrary, PAS stain revealed the presence of massive PAS-reactive globules restricted to epithelial cells bordering the collecting tubules (Fig. 1). PAS-reactivity of the globules were shown to be diastase-resistant, a finding suggesting their glycogen nature. The study of kidneys stained with the Weigert method for elastic fibers clearly showed the ability of this stain to mark the glomerular basal membranes (Fig. 2) that, in preterms, were not evidenced by other histochemical methods routinely utilized in the study of adult kidney biopsies, including Jones method.

DISCUSSION
Our preliminary data clearly show that old histochemical methods, probably too early abandoned, may be very useful in the interpretation of the complex scenario characterizing the newborn kidney. Among the advantages of these two stains, we would like to evidence the very low cost (less than 1 euro/stain), the rapidity of execution (less than 30 min) and the high reproducibility also in low level laboratories worldwide.

ABS 40

SCANNING ELECTRON MICROSCOPY OF THE DEVELOPING HUMAN KIDNEY
T. Congiu¹, M. Piludu², C. Mocci³, M. Piras², D. Fanni², C. Gerosa³, S. Nemolato³, A. Ravarino³, N. Iacovidou⁴

¹Department of Surgical and Morphological Sciences, University of Insubria, Italy
²Department of Biomedical Sciences, ³Department of Surgical Sciences University of Cagliari, Italy
undifferentiated globoid podocyte precursors, some podocytes assumed an octopus-like shape, characterized by multiple ramifying processes embracing the underlying capillary loop.

CONCLUSIONS

SEM allowed to easy collect informations about renal maturation and, in particular, regarding podocytes differentiation. Thanks to these observations, we can summarize the glomerular development in the following steps:

a. well defined Bowman’s parietal wall enveloping the visceral wall composed by a “mass” of roundish cell. These podocyte precursors are very close to each other and they do not show the typical disposition of mature podocytes resuming the glomerular capillary meshes;

b. some podocytes spread processes and pedicels. The capillary network becomes more distinguishable;

c. the podocytes are characterized by branched processes and interdigitated pedicels embracing well defined loops.

ABS 41

INTERINDIVIDUAL VARIABILITY IN MATURATION OF THE HUMAN THYROID GLAND DURING GESTATION

E. Tamponi\textsuperscript{1}, A. Dessì\textsuperscript{2}, G. Senes\textsuperscript{1}, A. Lampis\textsuperscript{3}, M. Furno\textsuperscript{3}, A.M. Nurchi\textsuperscript{3}, G. Pinna\textsuperscript{1}, M.L. Lai\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1}Department of Pathology, \textsuperscript{2}Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, \textsuperscript{3}Department of Pediatrics, AOU Cagliari, University of Cagliari, Italy

BACKGROUND

Development of thyroid gland during gestation has been analyzed in recent years by many authors. Thyroid primordium first appears as a thickening of the anterior foregut endoderm at the basis of the tongue. Subsequently thyroid progenitors cells move caudally and eventually differentiated into the thyroid follicles, bordered by hormone-producing cells. Later stages of thyroid morphogenesis are characterized by the integration of new progenitors, which ultimately differentiate into C-cells.

DESIGN

This study was aimed at analyzing the degree of differentiation of the thyroid gland in human foetuses and newborns of different gestational ages. We were particularly interested to verify if thyroid development could be strictly related to the age of

Figure 1.
gestation (GA) or influenced by other factors. To this end, we studied 17 well preserved autoptic thyroids from 13 foetuses ranging from 11th up to 22nd week of GA and 4 newborns (range: 26th to 38th week of GA).

RESULTS
The preliminary study of the histological picture of developing human thyroid glands first evidenced a marked interindividual variability regarding the degree of differentiation. Prominent differences where observed regarding the presence and the number of follicle structures among foetuses of the same gestational age. Differences were also found regarding the presence of colloid in the follicular lumen (Fig. 1, 2).

CONCLUSION
Our preliminary data clearly evidenced that thyroid gland development is not exclusively and strictly related to the gestational age. The prominent and striking differences of thyroid development here observed suggests that other factors influence maturation of the thyroid gland during intrauterine life. Further studies at immunohistochemical levels are needed to better characterize the follicular cells differentiation and changes in the migration into the thyroid prymordium of C-cells.

ABS 42
THE CHILD WITH WOOL STEEL HAIR
F. Sau, S. Pusceddu, D. Congia, M. Furno, C. Soddu, A.M. Nurchi

Stefano, 3 and a half months old, came to our observation for vomiting, right upper limb clonuses, deviation of the eye movements and drowsiness. Dysmorphic notes were evident: hypopigmented, curly and frizzy hair, chubby cheeks, abundant and loose skin over main folds, microcephaly. Spontaneous motor activity and muscle tone liabilities are reduced with inadequate neck and head control. Eye-tracking were absent with numerous episodes of contact’s reduction and gaze deviation to the left. DTR were present bilaterally as Moro reflex and symmetric. This raised the suspicion Stefano was affected by neuro-developmental delay syndrome.

During hospitalization Stefano appeard restless, with poor appetite and has many right upper limb clonuses, episodes of fixity and deviation of eyes. EEG detected diffuse slow background activity; right fronto-central region produced spindles; continuous discharges of spikes and slow polymorphic SW in the left parietal-occipital region, isolated spikes and SW in the right occipital region were detected. A combined valproate and clonazepam treatment abolishing convulsive episodes was prescribed. After 5 months the infant presented in flexion spasms and ocular revulsion; the EEG was hypsarrhythmic and vigabactrin treatment was added.

Ammonia (162 μg/dl), lactate (5.9 mmol/l) and pyruvate (0.223 mmol/l) were increased; coeruloplasmin (4.5 mg/dl) and copper (7 μg/dl) were reduced.
An abdominal ultrasound scan showed lack of differentiated cortico-medullary renal zones, calyco-pielic dilatation and a reduced thickness of parenchyma in lower calyces; kidney medulla showed enhanced echogenicity. Brain MRI showed left parieto-occipital cortical dysplasia with flattening of cortical furrows, and loss of definition between white and gray substance. This data and the evolution of the disease increased the suspicion the child was affected with a metabolic disorder causing psychomotor retardation, the clinical picture recalled Menkes Syndrome, this is caused by an alteration of copper transport protein. Children affected have a typical facies, seizures and low levels of coeruloplasmin and copper. The clinical suspicion was confirmed by genetic tests. These show a mutation of ATP7A gene, responsible for the disease.

REFERENCE

ABS 43
ACUTE RENAL CHANGES IN ASPHYXIATED RATS FOLLOWING THERAPEUTIC HYPOTHERMIA


1Section of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal section, University of Cagliari, Italy
2Department of Pathology, University of Cagliari, Italy
3University of New York Medical Center, NY, and Department of Pediatrics, Division of Neonatology, USA

BACKGROUND
Hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy (HIE) occurs in 1-3 per 1,000 births in USA and is the primary cause of cerebral palsy. The therapeutic hypothermia is standard treatment for asphyxiated infants.

Several previous studies suggested that therapeutic hypothermia improves survival and neurodevelopment in asphyxiated infants without significant side effects. Little is known about renal changes in asphyxiated infants who underwent therapeutic hypothermia, therefore this study aimed to evaluate renal histology in an experimental model of asphyxia treated with hypothermia.

DESIGN
HIE was produced in 7 days old (P7) newborn Sprague Dawley (SD) rats. They were randomized to the following groups: 1) HIE + salin (controls); 2) HIE + salin + therapeutic hypothermia; 3) HIE + adenosine + hypothermia. The rat brain was damaged according to the Vannucci’s model. Immediately following hypoxia, animals randomized to receive therapeutic hypothermia were placed on a water-jacketed heating/cooling pad and kept at 34°C for 24 hours. Animals assigned to salin or adenosine treatment received a single (IP) dose of 0.02 ml saline or 0.4 mg/kg of adenosine in saline (0.02 ml) following hypoxia. For evaluating acute kidney injury, rats were euthanatized at 24 hours post hypoxia/ischemia. Mitotic index and apoptotic index were calculated as numbers of mitotic figures and apoptotic globules in 5 fields at x 400.

RESULTS
No significant pathological changes were detected in kidneys from rats submitted to hypothermia and to adenosine treatment as compared to control rats. Marked differences were observed among three groups regarding the mitotic activity and the apoptotic index (Fig. 1). Hypothermia was associated with a significant decrease in the mitotic index in proximal tubules. In this group, kidney also showed an increase in the apoptotic index in the medulla. The association of adenosine to hypothermia resulted in a higher mitotic activity in proximal and in collecting tubules (Fig. 2, 3). Hypothermia also caused an increase in apoptosis in the medulla whereas adenosine association protected against the increase in medullary apoptosis.

CONCLUSION
Our preliminary data show that hypothermia does not cause acute pathological changes in rat kidney, but may decrease the mitotic activity in the renal cortex, paralleled by an increase in the apoptotic cell death in the renal medulla. Adenosine treatment plus hypothermia decreased the hypothermia-induced...
AIMS
Chlamydia trachomatis is one of the most common sexually transmitted agents. Infants born vaginally to infected mothers may present with conjunctivitis (20-50%) and/or pneumonia (5-20%) [1]. Chlamydia spp. is a frequent identifiable cause of neonatal conjunctivitis, in association with S. aureus, E. coli, N. gonorrhoeae. Topical eye drops such as silver nitrate 1% effectively prevent gonococcal neonatal conjunctivitis; however, antibiotic topical agents are commonly used in the clinical practice in the attempt to prevent also chlamydial infections.

METHODS
Topical ocular prophylaxis with fusidic acid was instituted early after birth. Data about new cases of chlamydial conjunctivitis from September 2011 to August 2012 were recorded. Data included length and course of pregnancy, maternal diseases, delivery method, newborn weight, postnatal course.

RESULTS
Two cases of isolated chlamydial conjunctivitis were recorded. Both infants (one male, one female) were born by vaginal delivery. They were full term, healthy infants, without ocular malformations, whose mothers were treated with neither systemic nor local antibiotics near delivery. Birth weight: 3,400 and 2,380 g respectively. Pregnancy courses are unknown. Both infants received antibiotic prophylaxis in each eye 20 minutes after delivery. The age of presentation for conjunctivitis was between day 10 and 12 of life. Infants presented with hyperemic conjunctiva, mucopurulent discharge and swollen eyelids. The male infant also had blood-stained eye discharge. Ophthalmological examinations showed follicular conjunctivitis. Definite diagnosis was made by detection of Chlamydia DNA by PCR on specimens obtained by swabbing the conjunctiva. Both infants were treated with systemic Clarithromycin at 10 mg/kg/day in 2 doses for 14 days, after an electrocardiogram was performed. No long-term ocular sequelae were found.

CONCLUSIONS
In addition to the typical features of chlamydial conjunctivitis, a follicular conjunctivitis was demonstrated at ophthalmological examination in both our neonates. Prophylaxis with fusidic acid did not prevent all cases of chlamydial neonatal conjunctivitis.

In the absence of information about pregnancy, screening for Chlamydia spp. may be an effective practice to prevent neonatal infection and related complications.
REFERENCE

ABS 45

TRANSIENT TACHYPNEA OF THE NEWBORN: WHAT IS NEW?

C. Nassar

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, King Fahad Hospital, Al Baha, Saudi Arabia

INTRODUCTION
Transient tachypnea of newborn is quite common but known to be benign and self-limiting; the aim of this talk is to highlight the long term consequences of this illness. Transient tachypnea of the newborn (TTN) was initially described by Avery et al. in 1966. Historically, TTN has been viewed as a "transitory respiratory disturbance resulting from a delay in alveolar fluid resorption", with an incidence of 5.7 per 1,000 births in term infants. The overall incidence of RD was 6.7%. Preterm babies had the highest incidence (30.0%) followed by post-term (20.9%) and term babies (4.2%). TTN was found to be the commonest (42.7%) cause of RD followed by infection (17.0%), meconium aspiration syndrome (10.7%), hyaline membrane disease (9.3%) and birth asphyxia (3.3%). TTN was found to be common among both term and preterm babies.

BACKGROUND
Although TTN is considered a self-limited transient condition, there are increasing data to suggest that TTN increases a newborn’s risk for developing a wheezing syndrome early in life [1]. Risk factors for development of transient tachypnea of the newborn period were maternal asthma, birth weight over 4,500 g, male sex, and urban location, and these infants were at significant risk for persistent wheezing later in life [2, 3].

One potential mechanism for the association between TTN and asthma has been the possible genetic predisposition for adrenergic hyporesponsiveness in these infants and mothers with asthma. A genetic factor also was discovered that beta1Gly49 homozygosity and TACC haplotype of ADRB2 gene, both loss-of-function genetic variations, may predispose to TTN. The critical link may be the association of adrenergic response and activation of Na transport in fetal alveolar epithelium required to help clear neonatal lung fluid. Thus, TTN may be the first manifestation of asthma in these children [4]. It was hypothesized that early life antibiotic treatment may modify the gut flora, and this may predispose the child toward development of allergy and asthma as suggested by the hygiene hypothesis. Thus, there are differences in the intestinal microbial flora between allergic and nonallergic infants. It is probable that the combination of a genetic predisposition and the modification of the environmental exposure from normal gut flora by antibiotic treatment may provide a synergistic risk factor for future asthma [5, 6].

EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHOR
We found in our experience that TTN is associated with subsequent respiratory morbidity and may be an early manifestation of “asthma”. We hypothesize that the genetic and environmental interactions synergistically predispose these children for future wheeze. Prospective studies are required to better define these factors.

REFERENCES

ABS 46

A 45-DAY-OLD MALE INFANT WITH DISTAL TUBULAR ACIDOSIS ASSOCIATED WITH HYPERAMMONEMIA AND HYPERLACTACIDEMIA


Pediatric Department “G. Macciotta”, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy

A 45-day-old infant was referred to our clinic for growth arrest. He was born at term, by cesarean section for breech presentation. Parents reported...
that their baby fed with difficulty and sporadically presented vomiting after meals. He was admitted in bad general conditions with adipose and muscular mass scant trophism, reduced skin turgescence and elasticity, modest plagiocephaly. Anterior fontanelle was normal, with intact sensory functions. Upon hospitalization, complete blood count (CBC) didn’t show any significant alterations, whereas a few days later we noticed the appearance of hypochromic anemia. Blood glucose level was normal, liver and kidney functions were preserved. Inflammatory indicators were negative, and blood tests showed hypokalemia, hyperchloremia, normal natremia, hypercalcemia and a phosphate value of 2.38 mmol/l. At first, blood-gas analysis showed a metabolic acidosis with pH 7.25, HCO3- 13.6 mmol/l, EB -14.4 and 16.4 mmol/l of anion gap. Urine tests detected modest proteinuria, leukocyturia and hemoglobin traces, urinary pH was 7. Urine culture was negative. Some urine electrolytes were modestly increased such as natriuria and kaliuria, while hypercalciumia was quite high. An increase in lactate and hyperammonemia was noted, which made us suspect the presence of an underlying metabolic disease. However, urine organic acids, urinary amino acids, blood amino acids, and pyruvate showed no significant alterations for diagnosis. Transfontanellar and gastroesophageal ultrasonography were normal, while renal ultrasonography showed a marked increase of echogenicity, completely covering all renal pyramids, attributable to medullary nephrocalcinosis. Audiometric screening was negative. Since our patient was strongly considered to have a distal renal tubular acidosis we planned genetic investigations in order to find the mutation type responsible for clinical signs. Additionally, we ordered a corrective treatment firstly by intravenous paediatric hydration and KCl then by oral therapy, that determined an improvement of growth and increase in weight. Sodium and potassium citrate doses were constantly changed during follow-up according to clinical needs, electrolytic modifications and auxological indices. The need of bicarbonate- as well as potassium citrate-had halved over time compared to the initial doses. Upon last control (8 months), the baby weighed 6,950 kg and the metabolic balance was preserved.

ABS 47

METABOLOMOMIC ANALYSIS OF BRONCHOALVEOLAR LAVAGE FLUID IN PRETERM INFANTS

OBJECTIVE
Currently, little is known about the overall metabolic status of preterm infants and only a limited number of metabolites can be measured in their biological fluid by conventional methods. Clinical management of preterm infants could probably be improved if more information about metabolic background of preterm during the development of respiratory distress syndrome (RDS) was available. Metabolomics is a technique used to non-invasively determine a snapshot of the current metabolic status of an organism by analyzing intact tissue or biofluids. Aim of our study was to analyze bronchoalveolar lavage fluid (BALF) metabolic profiles in preterm infants with RDS in order to identify metabolic assessment of this biofluid and to eventually have an early selection of infants at high risk to develop bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD).

METHODS
BALF samples were collected from a group of preterm infants at specific time-points (at birth prior surfactant, post-surfactant during mechanical ventilation and at extubation) and analyzed by proton nuclear magnetic resonance (1H-NMR) spectroscopy and GC-Mass Spectrometry.

RESULTS
Statistical analysis of spectral data identified distinct metabolic patterns but only 5 of them had a known molecular structure.

CONCLUSIONS
This holistic approach appears to be a promising tool for investigating metabolic assessment newborn with acute lung injury and could lead to a better knowledge and management of respiratory distress syndrome of preterm infants. This is the first application of this new methods in preterm infants. Our preliminary results provide support for further development and application of
metabolomics technologies and for the utilization of multivariate models for identifying factors involved in BPD development.

REFERENCES

ABS 48

TOXOPLASMA GONDII DNA DETECTION IN GUTHRIE CARDS: A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY

M.G. Capretti1, M. Lanari2, M. De Angelis1, C. Marsisco1, A. Marangoni3, P. Nardini3, M. Compri3, C. Foschi3, G. Faldella1

1Department of Obstetrical, Gynaecological and Paediatric Sciences, Operative Unit of Neonatology, St.Orsola-Malpighi University Hospital, University of Bologna, Italy
2Department of Paediatrics and Neonatology Unit, S. Maria della Scaletta Hospital, Imola, Italy
3Department of Diagnostic and Experimental Medicine, Unit of Microbiology, St. Orsola-Malpighi University Hospital, University of Bologna, Italy

AIMS

Congenital Toxoplasmosis (CT) in newborns results from primary maternal infection with T. gondii (TG). Most infected children show no symptoms at birth but are at great risk of sequelae during the first year of life or in early childhood [1]. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) analysis of dried blood samples on the Guthrie card has been proposed as a sensitive method to screen for congenital CMV infection, but there are no data about the use for TG screening.

The aim of present study was to assess the utility of PCR analysis of dried blood samples for the retrospective diagnosis of CT.

METHODS

A retrospective study was performed with 18 infants born between January 2010 and June 2012. Transmitters mothers seroconverted in the second trimester of pregnancy (mean 23.5 ± 7.9 weeks). At birth, serological tests (Enzygnost Toxoplasmosis IgG, IgM, IgA-Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics; Vidas Toxo IgMbioMerieux) as well as IgM-IgG WB (LDBio Toxoplasma WB IgG/IgM-LDBio Diagnostics) were performed in all mother-child pairs.

Nucleic acids were extracted from Guthrie cards with VERSANT kpCR Sample Preparation system (Siemens) and Toxoplasma Q-PCR Alert Kit (Nanogen) was used for the amplification of TG target region AF 146527.

RESULTS

In 7/18 (38.9%) infants, CT was diagnosed by IgM-WB positivity at birth. The remaining 11 were considered non-infected (61.1%) and became IgG negative within 12 months of life. Infected infants received one-year therapy (pyrimethamine/sulfadiazine) and were followed according to our protocol. Four of these had a pathological neuroimaging (4/4 calcifications, 2/4 ventriculomegaly). None had hearing loss. TG DNA was detected in only one of the Guthrie cards of the infected newborns, while all the others were negative.

CONCLUSIONS

Although serological methods remain basic in the diagnosis of CT, TG DNA detection in Guthrie cards could be considered a retrospective method to evaluate infants (> 1 year of age) with clinical signs suggestive of CT. More studies with a larger number of infected cases are needed to assess the sensitivity of this method.

REFERENCE

ABS 49

HYPOTONIA ASSOCIATED WITH RESPIRATORY DISTRESS: A CASE REPORT


Pediatric Department “G. Macciotta”, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy

A 7 months old female infant comes to our observation with dyspnea and hypotonia. She was born at 35 wk with low birth weight by twin distocial delivery. The remote pathological anamnesis was characterized by a previous hospitalization for post-vaccination polyradiculoneuritis (3 months of age), treated with intravenous infusion of immunoglobulin without complete benefit. The infant is admitted to our hospital in severe general condition, with dyspnea and paradox breath, tachypnea (respiratory frequency 40-50/min), without fever. She has, in
particular, an important thoracic deformation (bell-shaped arose to the fourth/fifth month of life). The neurological profile is altered and characterized by severe generalized hypotonia and hypokinesia. The remaining physical findings are normal. We start investigations concerning neurological and pulmonary diseases. CBC, inflammatory markers, renal and hepatic functions are normal, as well as CPK. Thoracic x-ray shows an opacification of the upper left hemithorax with modest attraction of the mediastinum framework, compatible with an active pulmonary process. ECG and cardiologic assessment are regular. Neurological evaluations reveal no attention disorder, eyes on axis, preserved ocular motility, no deficit signs of cranial motion nerves, no dysphagia, babbling language phase. Marked hypotonia and hypokinesia are confirmed and interested above all the trunk and limbs (especially lower). Reflexes are bilaterally absent on all landmarks, suggesting an hypotonic syndrome with impaired peripheral motor neuron. Cerebral ultrasound reveals the expansion of lateral ventricles in all coronal scans, interhemispheric fissure flaring with regular subarachnoideal periencephalic spaces. Metabolic investigations, EEG and brain MRI are normal. Electromyography shows neurogenic findings with both axonal and demyelinating aspects. Genetic tests confirm SMN1 (survival of motor neuron 1, telomeric) and NAIP genes deletion in homozygous state (PCR + enzyme digestion with MLPA). This mutation is identified in heterozygous state in both parents. The final diagnosis is spinal muscular atrophy type 1.

ABS 50

METABOLIC ANALYSIS OF NEWBORN’S URINE WITH CYTOMEGALOVIRUS CONGENITAL INFECTION. FROM THE DESCRIPTIVE TO THE PREDICTIVE ABILITY: PRELIMINARY RESULTS

E. Locci¹, T. Lazzarotto², L. Atzori³, L. Barberini⁴, F. Murgia⁵, M. Lussu¹, A. Noto¹, V. Fanos³, M. Lanari⁶

¹Department of Chemical and Geological Science, University of Cagliari, Italy
²Department of Microbiology and Virology, University of Bologna, Italy
³Department of Toxicology, University of Cagliari, Italy
⁴Department of Public Health, Molecular and Clinical Medicine, University of Cagliari, Italy
⁵Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Paediatric Institute and Neonatal Section, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy
⁶Paediatrics and Neonatology Unit, S. Maria della Scaletta Hospital, Imola, Italy

BACKGROUND

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is a DNA virus belonging to the family of herpes viruses. It is an ubiquitous virus that is found in the saliva, urine, secretions of the female genital tract, blood and breast milk and can be transmitted through the body fluids previously mentioned. Mother to child transmission can results from primary or non primary CMV infection during pregnancy, but primary infection carries the highest risk varying from 14.2 to 52.4%. The gold standard for the diagnosis of congenital CMV infection in newborns are the viral isolation or the use of the polymerase chain reaction in the urine or saliva within the first two weeks of life. Congenital CMV infection may result in multiorgan failure. 10-15% of these babies are asymptomatic at birth with a perinatal mortality rate of approximately 10%. 70-80% of surviving babies will present neurological or sensorineural sequelae, namely mental retardation and deafness. However these disabilities can occur in 8-15% of infants asymptomatic at birth.

There are still unsolved question concerning the prognosis and the follow up of asymptomatic subjects, that is due to the sometime late onset appearance of signs characterizing the disease, and among that those who will develop disabling sequelae [1]. So the detection of virological, laboratoristic or neuroradiological markers is very useful to compose a prognostic picture.

Subsequently the results obtained by Proton Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (¹H-NMR) “metabolomics” in the characterization of the metabolic states of individuals with overt disease or subclinical disease [2-5].

AIM

The aim of this study was to explore the metabolic differences between groups of children born with CMV infection which maybe asymptomatic, symptomatic at birth with or without sequelae and a group of children born without CMV infection, as control.

METHODS

Urine samples were collected from 40 children. The samples were prepared aliquoting 540 µl of urine and adding 60 µl of phosphate buffer (1.5M, pH 7.4 with 10% Trimethylsilyl propanoic acid in D2O). Urines were analyzed using ¹H-NMR Varian 500 MHz (Fig. 1). NMR spectra were subjected to multivariate analysis in order to combine metabolic variables using SIMCA-P+ (version 13.0, Umetrics, Sweden).

RESULTS

Using a PLS-DA (Partial least squares discriminant analysis) model, we were able to discriminate...
between the group of asymptomatic and the group of control (Fig. 1) and the group of symptomatic and the group of control (Fig. 2). As a matter of interest is the ability of the technique to characterize in the class of symptomatic those who have had serious complications from those that have an infection without complication. The mathematical models have pointed out the metabolites discriminating the groups.

REFERENCE


ABS 51

CONGENITAL DACRYOCYSTOCELE: CASE REPORT

G. Pinna1, S. Sionis1, G. Ottonello2, R. Puxeddu1

1Department of Otorhinolaryngology, University of Cagliari, Italy
2Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section, University of Cagliari, Italy

Congenital dacryocystocele (congenital nasolacrimal sac mucocele) is an uncommon consequence of congenital nasolacrimal duct obstruction. It could be consequent to the obstruction of two sites in the nasolacrimal system: the Rosenmüller valve proximally, the Hasner valve distally. This obstruction is responsible of accumulation of fluid in the drainage system that is clinically evident from birth as a grey-blue cystic swelling just below the medial canthus.

Congenital dacryocystocele is prone to infection causing a form of neonatal dacrocystitis. Such infection at this age can be potentially life threatening due to the risk of sepsis and acute respiratory failure during feeding or sleeping, because neonates are necessarily nasal breathers.

Diagnosis is based on clinical appearance and imaging. It is possible even in prenatal time thanks to ultrasound (US). Other more invasive imaging assessments, necessary for diagnosis confirmation, are nasal endoscopic examination, computed tomography (CT) or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), especially if the US diagnosis is not conclusive. The differential diagnosis includes haemangioma, encephalocele, glioma, dermoid cysts and malignant processes.

Treatment recommended is intranasal surgery to correct distal obstructions of the nasolacrimal duct, marsupialization of the cyst, balloon dilation, dacryocystoplasty, as first approach or if conservative approach (warm compresses, massage, medications) is inadequate.

We report one case of congenital dacryocystocele in a 4-days old female neonate. She presented
from birth a grey-blue cyst of the medial canthus of the right eye (Fig. 1). At nasal endoscopic examination we found a cystic swelling, covered by normal mucosa, obstructing inferior nasal meatus and causing respiratory distress. Diagnosis of dacryocystocele was confirmed by CT scan. The treatment performed was the marsupialization of the cyst, under general anesthesia and endoscopic vision (0° and 45°). During the procedure we observed emission of mucoid material associated with the immediate reduction of the external swelling. Rhinostomy results still canalized after two months after surgery.

Epipharyngeal lesions may cause unilateral or bilateral nasal obstruction, rhinolalia, snoring and sleep apnea, whereas dysphagia, odynophagia, earache and hoarseness are associated with meso- or hypopharyngeal lesions. Moreover they can cause acute upper airway obstruction and respiratory distress may be dramatic and require emergency measures to safeguarding the airway.

The first reported case refers to a male patient of 9 months. The parents of patient reported nasal airway obstruction with mouth breathing, snoring and dysphagia. Physical examination showed an oval and yellow-pink lesion with a diameter of about 3 cm with the planting base on the side wall of the left naso- oropharynx (Fig. 1), near the left anterior palatine fold and behind the soft palate, obstructing almost totally breathing space. MRI confirmed the site of the lesion.

The second case refers to a female patient of only 35 days of life. The symptoms reported by the parents were recurrent apnea associated with snoring, perioral cyanosis and bradycardia. The ENT examination showed a lesion oval of the

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**REFERENCE**


**ABS 52**

**A RARE CAUSE OF AIRWAY OBSTRUCTION IN CHILDHOOD: THE PHARYNGEAL TERATOMA. OUR EXPERIENCE**

S. Sionis, G. Pinna, R.A. Caria, R. Puxeddu

*Department of Otorhinolaryngology, University of Cagliari, Italy*

Teratomas are the most common congenital tumors, but they are rare in the head and neck region (1-9%). The highest incidence is recorded in the neonatal period, although they have been reported rarely appeared in adolescence and adulthood. The symptoms are influenced by the anatomical site in which it develops.
maximum diameter of 2 cm, implanted on the posterior palatal fold and on the left lateral wall of oropharynx. This lesion was flopping and caused obstruction of the laryngeal vestibule during spontaneous ventilation.

MRI confirmed the presence, in the oropharynx, a nodular oval lesion, about 2 cm in diameter, located postero-inferiorly epiglottis, confined above the glottic plane, with a tendency occlusive and occupying the right piriform sinus.

Both patients underwent surgical excision of the lesion under general anesthesia, under endoscopic view with a 45° rigid endoscope.

The diagnosis of teratoma was histologically confirmed in both patients who are currently disease free.

REFERENCE

ABS 53

OUTCOME IN CHILDREN WITH VESICO-URETERAL REFLUX: FROM ANTENATAL LIFE TO BLADDER TRAINING

G. Masnata, V. Manca, L. Chia, P. Pusceddu

Paediatric Urology and Urodynamic Unit, Paediatric Department, Azienda Ospedaliera “G. Brotzu”, Cagliari, Italy

INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE STUDY
Vesicoureteral reflux (VUR) rate is around 1-2% (0.4-1.8%) in an unselected population, while it varies from up to 20% to 40% in newborns and in children who develop febrile urinary tract infection (UTI) during the first year of life. VUR may be associated with an impairment of the renal parenchyma, congenital or acquired (post-infective) known as reflux nephropathy. During fetal life, in response to the presence of obstructive impairment, there is an alteration of growth factors and molecules that regulate apoptosis leading to cellular damage. After birth, in course of UTI inflammation activates a mechanism of fibrosis which causes kidney damage and permanent scarring. The aim of this prospective study was to evaluate the validity of the conservative approach to VUR and provide practical guidance to manage the child with VUR and UTI.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
This study included 199 pts with primitive RVU aged from 0 to 24 (mean age 9.1 years) referred to our hospital between February 1993 and May 2012. Of the 199 pts treated initially were enrolled in this study 181 pts (68 females and 113 males) with a total of 260 refluent units investigated. Patients were divided into two groups: group A includes children younger than 2 years, and group B with patients aged between 2 and 24 years. The group A was constituted by 20 pts (70% males and 30% females) while group B consists of 161 pts (61.5% males and 38.5% females). All 181 pts underwent ultrasound of urinary tract and VUR’s diagnosis was made through a voiding cystourethrogram (VCUG). Kidney function was evaluated with renal scintigraphy and GFR.

RESULTS
Of the 181 pts with VUR, 80 (44.1%) received a prenatal diagnosis. Of the remaining 101 patients, (55.9%), 80/101 (79.2%) had a UTI. During follow-up about 60% of pts had normal renal function, 40% of pts had an initial functional deficit, showed no further reductions in renal function.

None of the 181 pts had chronic renal failure. None of the pts of group A had episodes of UTI. Only 29/181 patients undergone surgery, mostly made an endoscopic treatment with bulking agents, other patients were treated with a vesicoureteral reimplantation.

The children who have not had prenatal diagnosis and which has not been prescribed prophylactic antibiotics after birth, developed febrile UTI in a percentage by 75% (group A) and 80.6% (group B). In children who have benefited from prenatal diagnosis and to whom has been given antibiotic prophylaxis, UTIs showed a rate of 9% (group A) and 26.7% (group B) (Fig. 1). No child had a decrease in renal function and even less developed ESRD. These results show also that the urotherapy allows to avoid recurrent UTIs associated with VUR.

CONCLUSION
The prognosis of a patient with VUR is difficult to calculate because it depends on many conditions.
Only selected cases require surgery. From the results of our study we cannot predict which patients will develop ESRD in adulthood. Prenatal diagnosis has a fundamental role to screen newborns with VUR and doctors may change the natural history of VUR by intervening in appropriate measure on any infections during the follow up in this group of patients and in the older patients by treating the dysfunctional voiding and constipation to prevent recurrent UTI.

REFERENCES

ABS 54

BLOOD AND MOLECULAR STUDY OF SARDEINIAN NEWBORNS

A. Dessì1, R. Carboni1, G. Ottonello1, M.C. Sollaino2, V. Fanos1, R. Galanello2

1Department of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal section, University of Cagliari, Italy
2Department of Pediatrics, Microcitemico Hospital, Cagliari, Italy

BACKGROUND
The WHO defines screening as the presumptive identification of a disease through the use of tests, examinations or other procedures that can be applied quickly. In the field of neonatal screening is the goal of a identify the conditions responsible for a genetic disease, so as to start an early treatment and prevent complications. Neonatal screening may be useful in identifying congenital blood disorders.

OBJECTIVES
The aim of the study was to define the reference values of haematological parameters of Sardinian babies. In addition, we evaluated the incidence of: βthalassemia (β039); hyperbilirubinemia (S. Gilbert) and deficit of G6PD. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University Hospital of Cagliari.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
We recruited 211 infants born at term (115M-96F), apparently healthy, with proper weight for gestational age. For each patient were taken from 2 samples of peripheral blood, one in first and one in the third day of life. The first sample was performed: blood count, totalbilirubin and fractionated, enzymatic analysis of G6PD, the second was measured total bilirubin and molecular investigations have been made.

RESULTS
RBC (x106/mm3): 5.6 ± 0.6; Hb (g/dl): 19 ± 2.1; MCV (fl): 100 ± 8.3; MCH (pg) 34.4 ± 2.7; WBC (x103/mm3): 21.6 ± 5.5; Neutral (x103/mm3): 13.8 ± 4.6; PLT (x103/mm3): 243 ± 63.

Dosage G6PD/6PGD:
- 14 deficient, 44 intermediate and 153 normal.

Dosage bilirubin (mg/dl):
- Tot 1st day: 4.5 ± 1.5; Dir 1st day: 0.5 ± 0.1;
- Tot 3rd day: 7.7 ± 3.3.

β039 mutation (%):
- Heterozygotes: 6; Normal: 94.

Gilbert’s syndrome (%):
- Homozygote: 11; Heterozygotes: 40; Normal: 49.

CONCLUSIONS
Our data show no particular conditions of the hematologic phenotype of Sardinians infants. The Gilbert Syndrome showed a % of homozygous mutated lower compared to previous studies on the Sardinian population. The search for the Mediterranean variant of G6PD on the females has highlighted the importance of the test molecular in doubtful cases. With the full study we can have a clearer picture and we can assess the impact of rare diseases such as neutropenia and thrombocytopenia.
PRESEPSIN VALUES IN HEALTHY MATURE AND NEAR-TERM NEONATES USING A NEW IMMUNOASSAY: A PRELIMINARY STUDY


OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this preliminary study is to measure presepsin levels in plasma from healthy term and near term newborns at birth and at 3 days of life for comparison, using a chemiluminescent enzyme immunoassay (Pathfast®).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Newborns were recruited in the delivery room and in the well baby nursery of the “G. Rummo” Hospital in Benevento, Italy. They were term or near term, apparently healthy. Blood specimens were obtained firstly at birth from cord and secondly from peripheral puncture on day three of life. Samples were processed with Pathfast®.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data are expressed as mean ± SD. A Student’s t test was used to compare the mean values of presepsin at birth and at the 3rd day. P value < 0.05 were considered significative.

RESULTS

A total of 64 blood sample were obtained at birth but only 28 samples were available at the 3rd day of life for presepsin analysis. Mean presepsin value in cord blood was 953 pg/ml (± 419), with an interquartile range of 661-1,114 whereas a mean value of 741 pg/ml (± 316), and interquartile values from 490 to 937, was found in blood samples collected on the third day of life. There was no statistical difference between values (p = 0.12).

CONCLUSIONS

Our preliminary study indicates that healthy neonates have a production of presepsin that does not change in the first three days of life. Ongoing study will allow us to develope an age and gestational age related nomogram and to assess eventually a diagnostic role of presepsin in neonatal sepsis.

REFERENCES


Terlipressin, a synthetic long-acting analogue of vasopressin, has been investigated as a second line vasopressor in adults and children with refractory septic shock, i.e. not responding to fluid resuscitation and high-dose catecholamine administration. Little experience is available about the safety and efficacy of terlipressin in term and preterm newborns. We report the case of an extremely low birth weight infant with severe septic shock, unresponsive to fluids, noradrenalin and hydrocortisone, in whom terlipressin was attempted as a rescue drug. Despite three doses of terlipressin, administered 6-hourly, the patient remained profoundly hypotensive and eventually died. Further studies are required before any recommendation on the use of terlipressin in term or preterm newborns with septic shock can be made.

ABS 58

PAROXYSMAL SUPRAVENTRICULAR RECIROCATING TACHYCARDIA (PSVRT) IN THE NEWBORN: THREE YEARS EXPERIENCE IN A NEONATAL CARE UNIT

A. Atzei¹, P. Neroni¹, P. Bassareo², R. Irmesi³, M. Balzarini¹, L. Bocchieri¹, G. Carboni¹, S. Floris¹, A. Manconi¹, R. Ledda¹, M.E. Trudu¹, G. Ottonello³

¹Pediatric Cardiology, AO Brotzu Cagliari, Italy
²Department of Cardiology, Policlinico Hospital, AOU Cagliari, Italy
³Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section, AOU Cagliari, Italy

BACKGROUND

Paroxysmal supraventricular reciprocating tachycardia (PSVRT) is an arrhythmia rarely occurring during pediatric age but it is the most frequent heart rate disorder in neonates, characterized by a significant clinical, diagnostic and therapeutic complexity. Pharmacological therapy unresponsiveness and therapeutic side effects lead to a consistent difficulty in management of PSVRT during such a delicate period in life.

STUDY POPULATION

From February 2009 to February 2012 the Neonatal Pathology Department admitted 10 neonates from 1 to 9 days of age, mean weight 3280 ± 160 g, affected by PSVRT. Pregnancy medical history was uneventfull in all 10 cases. In three cases a C-section for fetal suffering was necessary. Mean cardiac frequency at hospital admissions (8 from other hospitals and 2 from home) was > 230/min, without any other symptoms nor cardiac structural abnormalities.

The therapeutic approach in the acute phase was the following: 1st step – diving reflex (ice bag). 2nd step – pharmacological cardioversion: flecainide (90 mg/mq); in case of unresponsiveness: adenosine IV (start dose 0.1 mg/kg – maximum dose 5 mg/kg). If failure: propafenone IV.

A good therapeutic response with an appropriate control of arrhythmia and absence of recurrence was achieved in 8 patients, with cardiological follow up and maintaining therapy. Other two patients were transferred to a centre of excellence outside our Region.

CONCLUSIONS

Our experience shows the high frequency of this form in our region. The complexity in the therapeutic approach of the neonatal PSVRT highlights the need for a close collaboration between neonatologists and pediatric cardiologists.

REFERENCES


ABS 59

COUNSELLING IN NICU: WHAT CAN WE DO?

A. Coscia, G. Calciolari, C. Fabris, P. Di Nicola, E. Bertino

Intensive Care Unit, Neonatology Unit, University of Turin, Italy

In a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) the care is global, based on the newborn and on its family. This inseparable triad must be supported during the hospitalization both by the medical plan and the aware communication between the staff and those who receive the care.

The birth is physiologically accompanied by considerable expectations from parents, idyllic imagination and positive images. However, when something in birth goes wrong, as in the case of a very preterm birth, the abrupt change of perspective spreads a “grey” veil on the image that parents created. This “veil” makes it difficult to partially perceive ways of improvement. The arrival of a new newborn in the NICU leads to not only the infant’s entry but...
the parents’ too. It is a very delicate moment, rich in emotional tension: the father is usually the first one to be present at the door. He is very often alone, the entrance in NICU is disorientating, meeting with the baby and its image goes over every expectation. The father’s and beyond the mother’s reception is a crucial moment, the requested information is so vast, the risk to be misunderstood is very high. On one side, parents’ precise requirements do exist, above all to understand what is happening, but also the necessity to get information (and therefore to recognize the right person to ask and to choose the questions). Besides, parents are asked to carry on an important task: to succeed in tolerating the wait (for examinations, checks, answers, etc.) and therefore to bear the uncertainty, also preserving hope. This task is difficult to face up alone: for this reason the project related to counselling at our Intensive Care Unit is called “Not alone”. For these requirements, the difficult objectives of the medical staff are:

- to find the correct words;
- to decide what to say;
- not to use a technical language but not to lose authoritativeness;
- to complete the information given by others;
- to understand if parents have understood or if they need more information;
- to inform without upsetting;
- not to delude, but also not to remove hope.

Counselling arises from the need to satisfy these requirements. Therefore counselling addresses to people (as infant’s parents in Intensive Care Unit) who are living a difficult or unexpected situation and they are able neither to modify nor to avoid it. They do not necessarily ask for a psychological intervention, but they have demand for information, orientation, someone who knows how to let them see the resources that they really have, to be able to find sustainable solutions and to face up to their emotions [1–4].

Counselling is developed by all the professionals that intervene in that situation or that are involved to face up to those requirements of information, explanations, facility of decisions, finding of resources, agreement, help, reassurance, attention.

In medicine an important aim of counselling is to act as a “resiliency” factor, which supports parents’ passage from the “victim’s” to an “active” role. A shocking event (such as preterm birth) physiologically and inevitably produces parents’ reactions as incredulity, followed by anger, mistrust and sense of guilt. If parents are left alone to face up to such a situation, they will inevitably go to search for causes of what has happened and on this search they do not get over the situation. It is a faulty circle that departs from the emphasis on the past and it stops on the feeling of anger, impotence, report, with the parents’ risk to take the role of victims looking for revenge and medical-legal consequences.

Instead, if parents are assisted with support, the passage to confront each other is more probable as the awareness of what has happened and the projection toward the future; they acquire an active role and become responsible in care.

REFERENCES


ABS 60

COUNSELLING IN NICU: THE “NOT ALONE” PROJECT

A. Coscia, G. Calciolari, C. Fabris, P. Di Nicola, E. Bertino

Intensive Care Unit, Neonatology Unit, University of Turin, Italy

The project “Not alone”, put into work thanks to the collaboration of the institute of systemic-counselling “Change”, contemplates various aspects, all to let counselling become a shared culture [1]. The first essential aspect is to form the ability of counselling through periodic courses for all professionals of the department (physicians, nurses, physiotherapists). Obviously, the extension of abilities of counselling is useful to other professionals (experts, advisors) and to other departments more frequently involved. In our department a professional counsellor is present assisting the medical staff in direct counselling. Parents are directly contacted in our a department, or on announcement of the medical staff or from the counsellor. Many couples accept the meetings proposed.

In a moment full of emotions, information is sometimes unclear; when a new life breaks into everyday life, the support of this figure, speaking about their living, helping parents to understand the situation, is a kind of well accepted help. The counsellor’s intervention has also been helpful also for other professionals: psychologists, neuropsychiatrists, etc., when initially the necessity to be helped was denied.
The counsellor’s intervention allows a better parent orientation in the situation. A more effective sharing of these rules also facilitates the communication among parents and medical staff.

Periodic meetings are established among the medical staff, in which the professional counsellor discusses difficult situations in order to share possible communicative strategies.

We wanted to have not only a common communicative style, but also common subjects, independent from the characteristics of each of us. Individuals are often faced with diverse situations. For every setting that we more frequently face in communication (for example the first interview with a parent of a very preterm infant) we have built an “algorithm” that follows a pattern: 1) information always given; 2) frequent questions from parents; 3) frequent difficulties in the communication. The draft of the algorithm has been introduced then to all the professionals, who gave a vote from 1 to 4 to every point of the algorithm, according to their smaller or greater agreement with the proposed solutions. The most critical points have been discussed and we have arrived at a final solution.

To put the communication into effect would also need to record important moments, for instance the “case history of the communication”, a tool that we are still studying: in fact it would be desirable to have the case history, a sheet dedicated to important communications that are absolutely to be shared with other professionals. Counselling for us has also been something more. The following phase has been to face the critical moments, the new steps. In this case counselling becomes “element of development”. The decision to open the department to parents 24 h on 24 has been an important moment in our reality.

When a baby is born, its parents bind it to the world. If during the care process there is the possibility of not separating them, the future behavior really changes: the newborn is stronger and the time of hospitalization decreases. To make it happen we must consider parents’ life outside our Intensive Care Unit: some couples have got other children at home, the father usually works, moving in the city takes a long time. Based on these requests, the Care group of our NICU proposed to the medical staff and nurses to open of the department 24 h on 24. In the months that preceded the NICU’s opening, there have been a series of meetings in which the individual brought to the whole meeting own ideas and fears, absolutely justified. We must not forget that to be under the continuous surveillance of someone leads us to be judged, to lose own distances and perhaps the own “power”. However, this introduction has not weakened the discussion, rather it has made it charming and rich of contents. The counsellor’s presence and mediation allowed to find the resources in each individual and in the group and also the correct objective. The rules are written in a brochure that is given to parents by the counsellor that first welcomes them, and then are commented and discussed by the counsellor in the first meeting with parents: it is a questionnaire, including those questions that could be addressed by parents, and the relative answers.

Our group is constituted by imperfect professionals, but this group aims to learn and to look for new solutions for newborns and their families. We try to take advantage of an imperfect result, but we test and try every valid project for the health of those whom we care.

REFERENCE


ABS 61

NEONATAL MALPRACTICE CLAIMS RELATED TO HYPERBILIRUBINEMIA IN ITALY


1Department of Pediatrics, University Federico II, Naples, Italy
2Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Paeruculture Institute and Neonatal Section, AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy
3Department of Neonatology and NICU, S. Gerardo Hospital, Monza, Italy
4Family Pediatrician, Bergamo, Italy
5Division of Pediatrics, Pistoia Hospital, Pistoia, Italy
6Faculty of Law, University of Turin, Italy
7Forensic Science Department, University of Cagliari, Italy
8Division of Pediatrics, SS. Annunziata Hospital, Naples, Italy

All are the members of the National Commission on Pediatric Risk Management of the Italian Society of Pediatrics

BACKGROUND

Medical errors continue to capture the attention of the public, of the policymakers and of the physicians as well. We report the first data obtained in Italy on neonatology regarding a wide population study. Malpractice data can be used to identify problem-prone clinical processes and suggest interventions that may reduce negligence.

STUDY DESIGN

We conducted a retrospective, descriptive analysis of a nationwide database on neonatal malpractice...
claims, in which patients alleged an error. The Italian Society of Pediatrics (Società Italiana di Pediatría: SIP) has developed a link – through insurance broker Willis Italian SpA – with an insurance company (Carige Assicurazioni SpA) that insure 60% of all pediatricians of the Italian Society of Pediatrics (4,650 over 7,750). We had the permission from Carige Assicurazioni to work on their database that pools information to be utilized.

We asked Willis to perform a query of its database, looking at malpractice claims related to hyperbilirubinemia reported between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2010 involving perinatologists and neonatologists.

We defined a claim as: any written demand for compensation referred to the pediatrician or the institution where the pediatrician is on charge, with no legal paper having been filed in court, any notice of indictment or notice of investigation by criminal law, any circumstance where the pediatrician is aware of a medical liability action.

RESULTS
During a 6-year period (2005-2010), there were 661 claims reported to the Willis insurance of SIP with 4,650 pediatricians insured. The pediatric area was involved in 470 claims; the neonatal area in 191. It must be underlined that each claim interested one or more physicians.

The claims regarding hyperbilirubinemia were 8 and they are reported in Tab. 1, as they have been presented by the lawyers.

CONCLUSIONS
The neurologic injury is one of the principal drivers of high medical malpractice coverage costs for hospitals and physicians and in many occasions is not related to real negligence of the neonatologist, especially in very low weight newborns. Our data, to our knowledge the first available in Europe for neonatology, provide an update photograph of the situation in Italy, allowing an analysis of main causes and suggesting how to face the problem.

Hyperbilirubinemia represents the cause of claims in 4.2 of patients. This number is probably undervalued and this percentage will probably tend to increase with time.

Long-term monitoring of the situation will allow to understand the final result of the claim and to definitely inform neonatologist about their daily risks in order to prevent and solve legal problems.

REFERENCES

ABS 62
DETECTION OF BOVINE ALPHA-S1-CASEIN AND MINOR COMPONENTS IN HUMAN MILK BY PROTEOMICS TECHNIQUES

A. Coscia¹, P. Di Nicola², A. Conti², M. Raia¹, C. Vassia³, E. Bertino¹

¹Neonatal Unit, University of Turin, Italy
²CNR, Institute of Science of Food Production, Turin, Italy

INTRODUCTION
Cow’s milk contains more than twenty five different proteins, but only whey proteins α-lactalbumin, β-lactoglobulin, bovine serum albumin (BSA), and lactoferrin, as well as the four caseins, have been identified as allergens [1]. In particular, the casein fraction is composed of αs1-, αs2-, β-, and κ-casein, of which αs1-casein seems to be the major allergen according to IgE and T cell recognition data [2-4]. By now the detection of the above mentioned food allergens in human milk has been achieved by sandwich Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA) and Immunoblotting techniques. [3]. ELISA and Immunoblotting techniques have the disadvantage of possible cross reactions with other proteins that could be present in the sample and don’t take into account the possible chemical modification or proteolytic digestion of the proteins [5].

Aim of this study was to investigate cow’s milk allergens in human colostrum of term and preterm newborns’ mothers, and other minor protein components by proteomics techniques in order to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. 8 out of 191 claims in the neonatal area during a 6-year period, related to hyperbilirubinemia.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Exchange transfusion not performed (ateotosis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of monitoring with subsequent neurologic damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Hyperbilirubinemia-associated deafness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Permanent neurological damage and deafness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Breast milk associated hyperbilirubinemia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Delayed beginning of phototherapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Kernicterus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Discharge with hyperbilirubinemia by one Unit and readmission in another Unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
understand if cow’s milk allergens could be a cause of sensitization established through lactation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Term colostrum samples were collected from 62 healthy mothers delivering at term (36 completed week of gestation).

Preterm colostrum samples were collected from eleven healthy mothers who delivered prematurely (between 25 and 30 weeks of gestational age).

All samples were collected from mothers following a non restricted diet including cow’s milk and derivatives, just after breastfeeding their own babies. Samples were gathered up until the 4th day after delivery and frozen and stored at -80°C immediately after collection. Before analysis samples were defrosted at room temperature. Two different pools of 245 ml were created, respectively one of Colostrum of mothers delivering Term infants (CT) and another one of Colostrum of mothers delivering Preterm infants (CP). Then in each pool (CT and CP) five complete protease inhibitor cocktail tablets were added.

The sensitive detection of less represented new types of proteins contained in the whey fraction was made through the introduction of an additional prefractionation step. This step theoretically increases the concentration of the most diluted proteins and simultaneously reduces the concentration of the proteins present at high concentration (Proteominer Treatment).

Subsequently each sample were subjected to the steps of proteomic techniques (loading on gel, image acquisition by proteomic imaging system, in-gel tryptic digestion of proteins and protein identification by tandem mass spectrometry).

RESULTS

The most important result achieved in this study is the detection in human colostrums of one of the major allergens found in bovine milk: the intact isoform of bovine alpha-S1-casein (spot n. 39 in Fig. 1).

Also in the preterm colostrum sample, most of the proteins identified were different isoforms of caseins not previously reported in literature (spot n. 1 and 18 in Fig. 2 and Tab. 1).

The identification of alpha-S1-casein, the bovine allergenic protein in human colostrum, was possible due to the higher sensitivity, the specificity and the reproducibility of the proteomics technique: for the first time such protein was detected using mass spectrometry based methods, that are more reliable than immunoassay methods, used in the past.

Although the number of unknown proteins detected in human colostrum is not as striking as other studies previously suggested, it is possible to say that galectin-7, the different isoforms of the 14-3-3 protein and the serum amyloid P-component are present in human term and preterm colostrum milk at very low concentration (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2).

DISCUSSION

The detection of the intact bovine alpha-S1casein in human colostrum was the most relevant finding in this experience. In previous studies β-lactoglobulin, [6] one of the major cow’s milk allergen, was detected intact in human milk by immunoassay based techniques which are very sensitive methods of detection of food allergens (the estimated concentrations of nanograms per litre during their peak concentration) [6-8].

However, these techniques have the disadvantage of cross reacting with other proteins that could be present in the sample [5]. Moreover, these methods don’t take into account the possible chemical modification or proteolytic digestion of proteins [5] focusing on the detection of the intact protein.

On the contrary in our study, using ProteoMiner techniques, β-lactoglobulin was not detected in human colostrum either in term either in preterm infants. In fact mass spectrometry methods have high
Table 1. Identification of alpha-S1-casein from start CP, treated CP and treated CT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spot no.</th>
<th>Sample Name</th>
<th>Protein name</th>
<th>UniProtKB/Swiss-Prot Number</th>
<th>Protein p.I.</th>
<th>Protein sequence coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Treated CT</td>
<td>Alpha-S1-casein</td>
<td>CASA1</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Start CP</td>
<td>CASA1</td>
<td>BOVIN</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Treated CP</td>
<td>EPMIGVNQELAYFYPELFR.Q (148-166)</td>
<td>HQGLPQEVLNENLLR.F (23-37)</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 (continued). Identification of alpha-S1-casein from start CP, treated CP and treated CT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spot no.</th>
<th>Peptide sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>EPMIGVNQELAYFYPELFR.Q (148-166)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>HQGLPQEVLNENLLR.F (23-37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>EPMIGVNQELAYFYPELFR.Q (148-166)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sensitivity, specificity and reproducibility and using a prefraccionation step they can be considered more reliable than immunoassay methods in the detection of hidden allergens at very low concentration. Thus, according to our results bovine alpha-S1-casein could be considered the cow’s milk allergen that is readily secreted in human milk and could be a cause of sensitization to cow’s milk in exclusively breastfed predisposed infants. A higher concentration of bovine alpha-S1-casein observed in preterm colostrum compared to term colostrum samples. A possible explanation could be the different membrane permeability observed in mothers who delivered prematurely. However, a definitive explanation of this observation is lacking. Has alpha-S1-casein a major role in sensitization to cow’s milk of exclusively breastfed predisposed infants? Further investigations are needed.

We assumed that galectin-7 and 14-3-3 protein isoforms are associated with the small cell component present in human colostrum milk that comes from the apoptotic process of milk secretion during lactation [9]. The only previously undetected protein that we only found in colostrum collected from mothers delivering prematurely was the Serum amyloid P-component (SAP), a glycoprotein found in serum and urine; its tertiary structure is similar to the legume lectins. SAP has the ability to bind a variety of ligands including other proteins, glycosaminoglycans and DNA. The functions of lectins are not well known, although recently studies showed that mammalian homologues of the leguminous plant lectins seem to mediate intracellular sorting of glycoproteins in the endoplasmic reticulum and Golgi. In conclusion the functions of the SAP in human milk are not well known, but we could assume that it might has some protective role such as ascribed to lectins.

REFERENCES
IS SOLUBLE CD14 SUBTYPE (sCD14-ST) PRESEPSIN AN EARLY BIOMARKER OF NEONATAL SEPSIS? YES IT IS

E. Puxeddu¹, A. Noto¹, M. Mussap², P. Burrai¹, F. Cibecchini², M. Testa¹, M. Puddu¹, G. Ottonello¹, V. Fanos¹

¹Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Puericulture Institute and Neonatal Section AOU and University of Cagliari, Italy
²Department of Laboratory Medicine, University-Hospital San Martino, Genoa, Italy

BACKGROUND

Neonatal sepsis continues to be one of the most significant causes of neonatal morbidity and mortality. Early identification of neonatal sepsis is a major diagnostic problem because of the nonspecific clinical signs and limitations of the current diagnostic procedures. Recently, it was reported that the soluble fraction of CD14 might be a very early, specific biomarker of systemic inflammation and sepsis due to bacterial infection. CD14 is a glycoprotein expressed on the surface membrane of monocytes/macrophages (mCD14) and serves as bacterial lipopolysaccharides receptor. The complex LPS-CD14 (LBP) is released into circulation, where plasma protease activity originates the soluble CD14 subtype (sCD14-ST) or presepsin. The commercial availability of a very rapid and accurate analytical method for measuring sCD14-ST presepsin calls for clinical studies investigating the potential role of this biomarker in patients with systemic inflammation, sepsis, and severe sepsis. Moreover, there is the need to assess the potential role of sCD14-ST presepsin in predicting outcome in comparison with traditional sepsis and inflammation biomarkers.

OBJECTIVE

The aim of this study was to evaluate the clinical value of sCD14-ST presepsin in critically ill newborns, admitted in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

METHODS

This preliminary study was performed on 87 samples belonging to 26 newborns with gestational age ranging 26 to 41 weeks, admitted on the Pediatric Division, Cagliari. Newborns were divided in two groups: 10 newborns with systemic inflammation/sepsis microbiologically confirmed (group A) and 16 without sepsis (group B). The groups included both term and preterm newborn. In all the samples we measured C-Reactive Protein (CRP) and sCD14-ST presepsin. CRP was measured by immunonephelometry on the BN II (Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics, Milan, Italy); sCD14-ST was measured by a rapid chemiluminescent enzyme immunoassay on the fully automated PATHFAST® immunoanalyzer (Mitsubishi Chemical Corporation, Tokyo, Japan).

RESULTS

In group A, CRP and sCD14-ST mean values were 65 mg/l and 2,411 pg/l, respectively. In group B, CRP and sCD14-ST mean values were 5.7 mg/l and 899.0 pg/l, respectively. sCD14-ST seems to be a good marker for risk stratification in preterm patients. As showed in Table 1. Our preliminary results suggest a potential interesting prognostic value for sDC14-ST presepsin. Here we show data on preterm infants.

Table 1. sCD14-ST as stratification risk marker in preterm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Stratification</th>
<th>sCD14-ST (pg/ml)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Severe sepsis</td>
<td>1000-2000 pg/ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Septic shock</td>
<td>2001-5000 pg/ml</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Organ Failure (MOF)</td>
<td>&gt; 5000 pg/ml</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In particular, sCD14-ST strongly correlated with the severity of sepsis in all preterm babies. More important, sCD14-ST did not significantly increase in non-septic condition.

CONCLUSION

These results may support the hypothesis on the high specificity of this new marker in assessing bacterial infections and sepsis.

REFERENCES
