

Abstract Title: Idiopathic Anaphylaxis

Abstract Text: Anaphylaxis is serious systemic allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and may cause death. When no identifiable trigger can be found, it is termed “Idiopathic anaphylaxis“. Idiopathic anaphylaxis is thus a diagnosis of exclusion. A 50 year old female nurse practitioner was referred to allergy clinic for evaluation of four years of recurrent monthly episodes of generalized flushing, angioedema of the face, abdominal cramping, diarrhea, diffuse chronic urticaria and poorly controlled asthma requiring multiple ER visits and more than two courses of oral steroids per year. She also had 3 episodes of loss of consciousness due to anaphylaxis in the past six months. Precipitating cause of above mentioned symptoms was not identified. Patient had an extensive work-up to rule out systemic diseases such as: food and drug reactions, carcinoid syndrome, pheochromocytoma, hereditary angioedema, systemic macrocytosis, vocal cord dysfunction. With the exclusion of all of the above, a diagnosis of Idiopathic anaphylaxis was made. Patient was taking Prednisone 12 mg QAM for four years with frequent increases in dose due to symptom exacerbation. Her other medications included: Cyclosporine (for treatment of chronic urticaria), Atarax, Claritin, Zantac, Doxepin, Singulair, Symbicort, Nexium, Albuterol, Vitamin D and Calcium. Serum IgE level was sent (and currently pending) in order to dose Omalizumab IV infusions in an attempt to control patient’s severe asthma and titrate her down from Prednisone. This case illustrates symptomatology and approach to diagnosis of an uncommon condition, Idiopathic anaphylaxis. The number of patients with Idiopathic anaphylaxis in the United States has been estimated at 20,000 to 30,000. Timely diagnosis and treatment of this condition affords the patient a good prognosis and could potentially save \$ 11 million a year in emergency health care costs if Idiopathic anaphylaxis were to be appropriately identified and treated.

Category: Clinical Vignette

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