

# Catastrophic Thrombosis Syndromes

Jack Hensold MD  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
University of Washington  
Bozeman Health Cancer Center

# Catastrophic Thrombosis Syndromes

--Systemic vascular disorders that result in arterial thrombosis and tissue infarction/organ failure

-Venous thromboembolism can be increased in these disorders but do not qualify as “catastrophic”

-Primary Hematologic Disorders can increase risk of arterial thrombosis but are not considered in this topic  
(PNH, P VERA, E Thrombocytosis)

# Case #1

- Previously healthy 34 yo male presents to ED with sudden onset RUE weakness
- Physical Exam notable only for focal neurologic deficit
  - Brain MRI c/w left hemispheric infarct
  - CBC and MetC are normal

# Case #1

What testing do you order?

# Thrombotic Risk Profile

- Free Protein S → Reflex to Protein S Ag
- Protein C
- Antithrombin III
- Factor V Leiden
- Prothrombin gene mutation
- Homocystine
- Factor VIII
- PTT and Lupus anticoagulant
- Cardiolipin antibodies

# Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome (APS)

Autoimmune disorder characterized by one (or more) of the following laboratory abnormalities:

-Lupus Anticoagulant (LA)\*  
(artifactual prolongation of PTT)

\*Sydney Criteria

# Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome (APS)

Autoimmune disorder characterized by:

- antibodies to cardiolipin (false + VDRL) (>40 GPL or MPL)\*
- antibodies to  $\beta$ 2-glycoprotein 1 (>99%ile)\*

\*Sydney Criteria

# Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome (APS)

And characterized by one of the following obstetrical complications:

- one spontaneous abortion of morphologically normal fetus post-10 weeks gestation or;
- one premature delivery (<34 weeks) due to eclampsia/preeclampsia or placental insufficiency or;
- 3 or more spontaneous abortions before 10 weeks gestation with other causes excluded

\*Sydney Criteria

OR



# Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome (APS)

Or characterized by vascular thrombosis:

- One or more events of venous or arterial thrombosis
- If histology is performed, there can be no evidence of vasculitis

\*Sydney Criteria

# Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome (APS)

Autoimmune disorder characterized by vascular thrombosis:

- In a case-control study LA was associated with a 3.6-fold increased risk of venous thrombosis
- In patients < 50 yo, LA associated with a 43-fold increase risk of stroke  
(risk increases to 200-fold with concurrent OCP use and 80-fold with concurrent smoking)

# Case #1

-Recommended treatment:

Life-long anticoagulation due to 43-fold increased risk of stroke associated with LA.

(Note: There is NO data to support the use of NOACs in APS and until this data is available, this is not recommended)

## Case #2

- Healthy 21 yo diagnosed with APS following spontaneous abortion in presence of a low titer LA (normal PTT, mild prolongation of DRVVT)
- Four years later delivered a healthy baby boy with lovenox administered 40 mg SQ throughout the pregnancy

## Case #2

Presents to ED one week post-partum c/o  
urticarial rash on buttocks and face;  
pain in upper abdomen and thighs

### Meds:

lovenox 40 mg SQ

ASA and ibuprofen prn

Augmentin

## Case #2

Exam:

- small violaceous, tender lesions on ears and buttocks
  - abdomen mildly tender, but not acute
  - muscular tenderness in thighs
- (Doppler U/S without evidence of clots)

# Case #2

## Labs:

- PTT 73.7
- platelets 202K
- anti-Cardiolipin IgG >1/100

## Treatment:

- Lovenox at full anti-coagulation dosing and transitioned to coumadin with resolution of sx

## Case #2

- 3 years, due to a desire to become pregnant, transitioned to lovenox (full-dose)
- 1 week later with c/o nausea, diarrhea and chest pain



# Case #2

|           | 8/4  | 8/11     | 8/14      | 8/15 |
|-----------|------|----------|-----------|------|
| Hgb       | 13.9 | 13.2     | 11.9      | 10.7 |
| platelets | 281  | 199      | 154       | 146  |
| AST       | nl   | 85       | 121       |      |
| Anti-Xa   |      | 0.86     |           |      |
| Radiology |      | CTPA (-) | CT AP (-) |      |

# Case #2

- Switched to coumadin the following day (bridging with lovenox)
- Admitted to hospital 3 days later with persistent symptoms
- Fluid overload with EF 30% & troponin 30
- Treated for MI/CHF, improved and remains stable on anti-coagulation with coumadin

## Case #2

Did this patient fail on heparin therapy or have “autoimmune” HIT?

# Heparin-induced thrombocytopenia

A thrombotic disorder (venous and arterial) that occurs following exposure to heparin

# Heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT)

4 “T” scoring system to assess probability of HIT

- Timing (5-10 days post-exposure)
- Thrombocytopenia (> 50% reduction in platelet count)
- Thrombocytopenia (without other explanation)
- Thrombosis

0-2 points accorded for each T

0-3 low risk, 4-5 intermediate, 6-8 high risk

# Pathogenesis of HIT & APS

|                        | HIT                          | APS                                | Result  |
|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Antigen                | PF4 bound to anion (heparin) | $\beta$ 2GP1                       |   |
| Platelet Target        | PF4<br>FcR                   | Glycoprotein IB<br>ApoE receptor 2 | Platelet aggregation and activation →<br>Thrombin |
| <u>Vascular Target</u> | PF4/Heparan                  | Annexin A2*<br>ApoE receptor 2     | Increased TF expression →<br>Thrombin             |
| 2° factors             | Increased tissue damage      | Inflammation                       | -PF4 generation<br>-Endothelial activation        |

# Heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT)

Treatment:

- inhibit thrombin

  - Argatroban (direct thrombin inhibitor)

Decrease thrombin generation

- Do not start coumadin until plt > 140 K

## Case #3

-52 yo female presents with abdominal pain and diarrhea

-One week later admitted to hospital with following labs:

creatinine 3.2, plts 68K, Hgb 8.5, LDH 442, Tbili 2.1



## Case #3

What do you order to establish Dx?

# Shiga Toxin-Mediated Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome

- A subset of thrombotic disorders characterized by MicroAngiopathic Hemolytic Anemia (MAHA)
  - Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)
  - Thrombotic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (TTP)
  - Complement-Mediated Thrombotic Microangiopathy  
(Atypical HUS)

# Clinical features of MAHA

- MicroAngiopathic Hemolytic Anemia (MAHA)
  - Elevated LDH and Bilirubin
  - Schistocytes
- Thrombocytopenia
- Absence of coagulopathy (DIC)
- Organ failure
  - Somewhat variable depending on cause
    - HUS and aHUS– renal
    - TTP – CNS, others, rarely significant renal failure

# Specific Lab testing for MAHA

- TTP – decreased ADAMTS13 activity
  - auto-antibodies to ADAMTS13
  - ADAMTS13 Deficiency (Congenital)
- HUS – E.Coli O157:H7
- Complement-mediated (atypical HUS) exclusion of above two causes
  - May be acquired, due to auto-antibodies to CFH or
  - Inherited due to defects in proteins that downregulate complement activation

# Pathology of MAHA

- TTP – failure to cleave large von Willebrand multimers (deficiency of ADAMTS13)
- HUS – binding of Shiga toxin to CD77 on endothelial cells results in apoptosis
- aHUS – complement-deposition results in damage to endothelial cells and activation of platelets

# Pathology of MAHA

- Platelet adherence to wall of small arterioles
- Due to increased platelet aggregation (TTP), vessel wall damage (HUS) or both (aHUS).
- Occlusion of small arterioles leads to shearing of RBCs

# Alternate Causes of MAHA

- Drug-mediated
  - Immune-mediated
    - » Quinine, quetiapine, gemcitabine
  - Toxic
    - » VEGF inhibitors (avastin, et al)
    - » Calcineurin inhibitors  
(cyclosporine, tacrolimus)

# Alternate Causes of MAHA

- DIC (elevated PT, decreased fibrinogen)
- Valve hemolysis (no thrombosis)
- Vascular malformations (Kasabach-Merritt)



# Treatment of MAHA

- TTP – plasmapheresis to remove antibodies + immunosuppressive therapy
- HUS – hydration and supportive care
- aHUS – eculizumab
- Drug-induced – remove offending drug and supportive care

# Catastrophic Thrombosis Syndromes

--Systemic vascular disorders that result in  
arterial thrombosis and tissue  
infarction/organ failure

--Coagulation testing is rarely helpful  
(except to exclude DIC), since the primary  
defect is endothelial in most cases

# Catastrophic Thrombosis Syndromes

## Suggested References:

George J, Nester C. Syndromes of thrombotic microangiopathy. NEJM 2014; 371: 654-666.

Giannakopoulos J, Krilis SA. The pathogenesis of antiphospholipid antibody syndrome. NEJM 2013; 368: 1033-1044.

Greinacher A. Heparin-induced thrombocytopenia. NEJM 2015; 373: 252-261.

Ortel TL, Erkan D, Kitchens C. How I treat catastrophic thrombotic syndromes. Blood 2015; 126: 1285-1293.