



Visceral Leishmaniasis and HIV/AIDS Co-Infection

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Abstract: *Visceral leishmaniasis* (VL) is a severe disease associated with high rate of morbidity usually observed in immunocompetent hosts living in endemic areas. Nowadays the risk of clinical VL is increased due to immunosuppression among HIV infected patients and is a common complication in AIDS patients living in leishmania endemic areas. Albania as a Mediterranean basin country is considered an endemic region. Four cases of concurrent HIV/AIDS and VL were documented at University Hospital Centre “Mother Theresa” Tirana between 2005 and 2012. HIV infection was attributed to sexual transmission in all cases. The prevalence of VL was similar in both genders and 75% of patients lived in urban area. The diagnosis was made by direct recovery of parasites in bone marrow aspirate. All patients CD4 lymphocytes count were less than 200 cell/mm³ and VL was diagnosed concomitantly with HIV infection in three out of four patients. There were no deaths during treatment, nor registered relapses in our cohort. Clinical manifestations of VL in HIV infected patients are similar with those of non immune-compromised ones. Direct recovery of parasites in bone marrow aspirate is the examination of choice.

Keywords: *Visceral leishmaniasis, HIV/AIDS, diagnosis, treatment*

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