Evaluation of 316 Children with Acute Rheumatic Fever; A Single Center Study From Turkey

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Objectives; We aimed to investigate the diagnostic findings of acute rheumatic fever patients (ARF) seen over the past seven years in center Anatolia in Turkey. We evaluated long term effects of treatment modalities on cardiac sequelae rate.

Method: We analyzed the medical records of 316 patients who were diagnosed with new onset ARF, between January 2005 and December 2011 years, retrospectively.

Results: The mean age of the patients was 10.5 years and the female/male ratio was 1.2. The most frequent complaints were arthritis in 78.1% of the patients. The most frequent major finding was the combined presence of arthritis with carditis in 38.6% of the patients. Monoarthritis was identified in 30.3% of patients with joint involvement. Carditis was detected in 242 cases (76.5%) and 102 cases (32.2%) presented with Sydenham’s Chorea. Carditis was found in 64% of the patients as isolated mitral regurgitation. Patients with silent carditis constituted of 27.2% of all cases with carditis. Rheumatic valvular disease was more frequent during the follow up of patients with more severe carditis at initial attack and in cases with combined valve involvement (p<0.05). Severe form heart failure was detected in 8 cases (3.3%) and valvular surgery was performed in two cases. The side effect rate in patients received acetylsalicylic acid (19.7%) was higher than patients received Naproxen sodium (p<0.005). The median follow-up duration was 28 months. The rate of compliance with secondary prophylaxis was 80.7%. Recurrent attacks were detected in 15.8% of patients. The rate of recurrence was 4.2% in patients with a full compliance to secondary prophylaxis, whereas this rate was 65.2% in not compliant patients (p<0.001). The prevalence of chronic rheumatic valvular disease in patients received Naproxen sodium was not different from patients received acetylsalicylic acid. Rebound, recurrence and cardiac sequelae rate in patients received steroid were not different from patients treated with a non steroidal drug (acetylsalicylic acid or naproxen).

Conclusion: This study demonstrated that diagnostic findings of rheumatic fever have not changed for seven years in center Anatolia. Naproxen was an excellent alternative antiinflammatory drug.