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Carsten S. Petersen¹, Anne Grethe Danielsen¹ and Jan Renneberg²
Departments of ¹Dermato-venereology and ²Microbiology, Bispebjerg Hospital, University of Copenhagen, DK-2400 Copenhagen, Denmark.

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* Non-gonococcal Urethritis

Sir,

Non-gonococcal urethritis is one of the commonest sexually transmitted diseases. The aetiological agents include *Chlamydia trachomatis*, *Ureaplasma urealyticum*, *Trichomonas vaginalis* and *Mycoplasma genitalium* (1). The case presented here is an uncommon occurrence of Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) non-gonococcal urethritis.

CASE REPORT

A 25-year-old unmarried man presented with urethral discharge and pain during micturition for the last 2 days. He had had a single unprotected penovaginal sexual encounter with a female sexworker 5 days earlier. He had a history of many heterosexual exposures with multiple partners during the past 5 years, but no history of any previous sexually transmitted diseases. Examination revealed copious, purulent urethral discharge with marked erythema and oedema of the meatus, prepuce and penile skin. Gram-stained urethral smear showed many polymorphonuclear cells, gram-positive cocci but no Gram-negative diplococci. Urethral discharge cultures were put on Modified Thayer-Martin medium, Chocolate agar, MacConkey agar and Brain Heart Infusion agar supplemented with haemin and vitamin K. Cultures were negative for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. Pure growth of *Staphylococcus aureus* was obtained, and showed antimicrobial resistance to penicillin, tetracycline, erythromycin, chloramphenicol, streptomycin, cephalixin, ceftriaxone, oxacillin and susceptibility to amikacin and vancomycin by stokes disc diffusion technique. The organism also demonstrated β lactamase production, NCCLS breakpoint oxacillin MIC of >2 $\mu\text{g/ml}$ and susceptibility to amoxycillin-clavulanic acid (augmentin) disc thus indicating a low level methicillin resistance probably due to hyperproduction of β lactamase (2). *Chlamydia trachomatis* antigen detection by DIF test was negative. VDRL and TPHA were non-reactive and ELISA for HIV I and II was negative. The patient was given ceftriaxone 250 mg i.m. and showed no response when seen after 48 h. He was, then, treated with 2 tablets orally of amoxycillin 250 mg with clavulanic acid 125 mg (augmentin) every 8 h with marked improvement in symptoms and signs within 48 h and continued the medication for 10 days with clinical and microbial clearance both on smear and culture. His sexual partner did not attend for examination.

DISCUSSION

Staphylococcus aureus is not mentioned among the common aetiological agents for non-gonococcal urethritis (NGU), though it has been isolated and implicated in NGU patients (3–6) and also in patients with trichomonal urethritis (7). The present case is reported because of the uncommon occurrence

of MRSA in NGU urethritis, which to the best of our knowledge has not been reported so far. With the first reports of MRSA in 1960s, its occurrence has now been recorded worldwide both as a nosocomial and community-acquired pathogen that is becoming progressively resistant to many widely used antibiotics (8, 9). Thus, occurrence of MRSA as a sexually transmitted pathogen assumes significance and is a matter of concern. *Staphylococcus aureus* infection is initiated when there is a break in the continuity of skin or mucosa. Promiscuous sexual behaviour in the present case probably increased the patient's risk of infection. This particular factor has not been explored in any previous study and needs to be examined in detail especially with MRSA causing NGU.

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P. Sharma¹ and A. Singal²

Departments of, ¹Microbiology and ²Dermatology, University College of Medical Sciences & Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital, Delhi 110095, India.