

# Case report: Multiple autoimmune syndrome

Ibrahim Abdulghafoor Ibrahim Agha<sup>1</sup>, Safaa Jassim Mohammed<sup>2</sup>, Yusur Farhan Bdaiwi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Clinical- Hematology, "Ibn Sena" Teaching Hospital, Nineveh Health Department, Ministry of Health, Nineveh, Iraq

<sup>2</sup> Department of Patho-hematology, "Al-Hadbaa" Blood & BMT Hospital, Nineveh Health Department, Ministry of Health, Nineveh, Iraq

## ABSTRACT

This is a case of multiple autoimmune syndrome with the co-occurrence of vitiligo, pernicious anemia, celiac disease and autoimmune hepatitis is extremely rare. We are presenting a case is a 40-year-old woman with autoimmune hepatitis who is suffering from poor appetite, weight loss and skin lesions. Laboratory investigation shows hypochromic microcytic anemia, B12, and iron deficiency. The testing for parietal cell antibody was positive so pernicious anemia was diagnosed with positive Tissue transglutaminase antibody IgA so the diagnosis of celiac disease was confirmed.

**Keywords:** pernicious anemia, autoimmune hepatitis, celiac disease and vitiligo

## INTRODUCTION

Multiple autoimmune syndrome (MAS) is a status in which patients have at least three distinct autoimmune diseases. About 25% of patients with autoimmune diseases have a tendency to develop another autoimmune condition [1].

MAS is classified into three groups, that each depend to specific diseases that tend to occur with one another:

Type 1 "MAS": includes myasthenia gravis, thymoma, polymyositis, and giant cell myocarditis.

Type 2 "MAS": includes Sjögren's syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, primary biliary cirrhosis, scleroderma, and autoimmune thyroid disease.

Type 3 "MAS": includes autoimmune thyroid disease, myasthenia gravis and/or thymoma, Sjögren's syndrome, pernicious anemia, idiopathic thrombopenic purpura, Addison's disease, type 1 diabetes mellitus, vitiligo, autoimmune hemolytic anemia, systemic lupus erythematosus, and dermatitis herpetiformis [1].

The pathologic mechanism responsible for the MAS is still not understood because of the fact that many autoimmune diseases share susceptibility genes which suggests a genetic cause. The phenomenon of familial autoimmunity and the juxtaposition

of chromosomic regions associated with MAS (for example, the 6p21.3 region) support that hypothesis. Even so, it is necessary to consider that genetic susceptibility to MAS can occur not only from the presence of risk alleles, but may be from the absence of protective ones. Many studies and genetic mapping have suggested a relation between many of HLA alleles on classes I and II and "MAS" [2].

## CASE REPORT

40-years-old female present with pallor, fatigue and poor appetite and weight loss of 8 lb for two months. Her blood tests show: low hemoglobin (Hb) 7.9 g/dl (normal value 12-15 g/dl), (MCV) 56  $\mu\text{m}^3$  (normal value 80-98  $\mu\text{m}^3$ ) and (MCH) 15.4 pg (normal value 26.4-32.3) with normal total white blood cell 8.6  $\times 10^9/\text{L}$  (normal value 4-10  $\times 10^9/\text{L}$ ) and normal neutrophil count 5  $\times 10^9/\text{L}$  (normal value 2-7  $\times 10^9/\text{L}$ ), normal lymphocyte count 2.8  $\times 10^9/\text{L}$  (normal value 1-3  $\times 10^9/\text{L}$ ) but had high platelet count 517  $\times 10^9/\text{L}$  (normal value 150-410  $\times 10^9/\text{L}$ ) and ESR 67 mm/hr (normal value  $\leq 12$  mm/hr). Liver enzymes was elevated (AST) 86 U/L (normal value 5-34 U/L), (ALT) 83 U/L (normal value  $< 44$  U/L), total serum bilirubin 20  $\mu\text{mol/L}$  (normal value 3-21  $\mu\text{mol/L}$ ), direct bilirubin 8  $\mu\text{mol/L}$  (normal value 0-9  $\mu\text{mol/L}$ ) and indirect bilirubin 12  $\mu\text{mol/L}$

Corresponding author:

Safaa Jassim Mohammed

E-mail: Safaa.jasim.mohammed@gmail.com

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**FIGURE 1.** Depigmented patch with leukotrichia foot of patient

(normal value 0-12  $\mu\text{mol/L}$ ), smooth muscle antibodies (ASMA) was positive and live/kidney microsome (LKM) type I antibodies was positive 11.9 U/mL (positive  $\geq 10$  and negative  $< 10$  U/mL). Hepatitis A, B and C virus screen was negative. The urea, creatinine and electrolyte was normal. Thyroid function test was normal. Antinuclear antibodies (ANA) were 0.3 (negative), double stranded DNA antibodies 1.9 IU/mL (negative  $< 20$ , positive  $\geq 20$ ), antimitochondrial antibodies (AMA) 1.3 IU/mL (negative  $< 10$ , positive  $\geq 10$ ) all was negative. Tissue transglutaminase antibody IgA was positive  $> 200$  U/mL (negative  $< 10$ , positive  $\geq 10$ ). Intrinsic factor antibody (IFA) was negative 1.8 U/mL (negative  $< 6$ , positive  $\geq 6$ ), while partial cell antibody (PCA) was positive  $> 100$  U/mL (negative  $< 10$ , positive  $\geq 10$ ). Serum B12 180 pg/mL (normal value 205-876 pg/mL). Blood film show hypochromic microcytic red blood cell due to iron deficiency anemia, white blood cell normal count and differential, no immature cell is seen, and platelet show increase in film.

So according to history, physical examination and investigation patient had vitiligo, pernicious anemia, celiac disease and autoimmune hepatitis.

She started to take oral iron and vitamin B12 supplementation, so hemoglobin return to normal from

7.9 g/dl before treatment to 13.5 g/dl (normal value 12-15 g/dl) after treatment.

## DISCUSSION

Autoimmune disease is the result of the immune system incidentally attacking of the body in place of saving it. When more than one autoimmune condition occurs gathered, this is defined as “polyautoimmunity”. When three or more autoimmune conditions occur to gather, this is known as multiple autoimmune syndrome (MAS).

Researchers suggested that environmental factors and genetic background are involved. The combination of multiple autoimmune disease comprising autoimmune hepatitis, pernicious anemia, celiac disease and vitiligo is rare.

The American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) advise that patients with a new diagnosis of autoimmune hepatitis undergo serologic testing to rule out thyroid disease and celiac disease [3].

Riaz A et al. case report study show resented a case of a 70-year-old woman with AIH who s suffering from anemia which was investigated and pernicious anemia was diagnosed [4].

TABLE 1. Show the laboratory values of the patient

|                                      | Result                       | Normal value                                        |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Hemoglobin                           | 7.9 g/dl                     | 12-15 g/dl                                          |
| MCV                                  | 56 µm³                       | range 80-98 µm³                                     |
| MCH                                  | 15.4 pg                      | 26.4- 32.3                                          |
| total white blood                    | cell 8.6 ×10 <sup>9</sup> /L | 4-10 ×10 <sup>9</sup> /L                            |
| neutrophil count                     | 5 ×10 <sup>9</sup> /L        | 2-7 ×10 <sup>9</sup> /L                             |
| lymphocyte count                     | 2.8 ×10 <sup>9</sup> /L      | 1-3 ×10 <sup>9</sup> /L                             |
| platelet count                       | 517 ×10 <sup>9</sup> /L      | 150-410 ×10 <sup>9</sup> /L                         |
| ESR                                  | 67 mm/hr                     | ≤ 12 mm/hr                                          |
| AST                                  | 86 U/L                       | 5-34U/L                                             |
| ALT                                  | 83U/L                        | < 44U/L                                             |
| total serum bilirubin                | 20 umol/L                    | 3-21 umol/L                                         |
| direct bilirubin                     | 8umol/L                      | 0-9 umol/L                                          |
| indirect bilirubin                   | 12 umol/L                    | 0-12 umol/L                                         |
| smooth muscle antibodies (ASMA)      | positive                     | Negative                                            |
| live/kidney microsome (LKM)          | 11.9 U/mL                    | positive ≥ 10 and<br>Negative < 10 U/MI             |
| type I antibodies                    |                              | 0.25-5 uIU/ml                                       |
| TSH                                  | 2.5 uIU/ml                   | Negative <1.0<br>Equivocal 1.0-1.2<br>Positive >1.2 |
| Antinuclear antibodies (ANA)         | 0.3                          | negative <20<br>positive ≥20                        |
| double stranded DNA antibodies       | 1.9 IU/MI                    | Negative <10<br>positive ≥10                        |
| antimitochondrial antidodies (AMA)   | 1.3 IU/ml                    | Negative <10<br>positive ≥10                        |
| Tissue transglutaminase antibody IgA | >200 U/ml                    | Negative <6<br>positive ≥6                          |
| Intrinsic factor antibody (IFA)      | 1.8 U/ml                     | Negative <10<br>positive ≥10)                       |
| partial cell antibody (PCA)          | >100 U/ml                    |                                                     |
| Serum B12                            | 180 pg/ml                    | 205-876 pg/ml                                       |

A retrospective study by Teufel et al. showed some of the common associations include autoimmune thyroiditis, vitiligo, rheumatoid arthritis, celiac disease, systemic lupus erythematosus, type 1 diabetes,

multiple sclerosis, polymyalgia rheumatica, and urticarial [5].

Villalta et al. study showed a high incidence of celiac disease in patients with autoimmune hepatitis [6].

Autoimmune hepatitis is occurred with a wide variety of other disorders including of other systems that may be found at disease onset or may develop during the course of the active liver disease. Most of these disorders are immunologic in origin. Patients may present with symptoms of the following hematologic disorders: Hypersplenism (usually attributable to cirrhosis and portal hypertension), Autoimmune hemolytic anemia, Coombs-positive hemolytic anemia, Pernicious anemia and ITP and Gastrointestinal disorders associated with autoimmune hepatitis includes inflammatory bowel disease, which is seen in 6% of cases. The presence of ulcerative colitis in patients with autoimmune hepatitis should prompt performance of magnetic resonance cholangiopancreatography (MRCP) to exclude a diagnosis of primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC). [7].

CONCLUSION

Our patient exemplifies a rare association of multiple autoimmune syndromes comprising autoimmune hepatitis, pernicious anemia, celiac disease and vitiligo.

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