

Invasive rhinosinusal mucormycosis after hematopoietic stem cell transplantation in a myelodysplastic syndrome patient.

Gastélum-Cano JM^{1,2}, Motolinia-Muñoz Y^{1,2}, Marín-Corte JC^{1,2}, Ortega-Amaya ER^{1,2}, Gordillo-Martínez AM^{1,2}, Ruiz-Argüelles GJ^{1,2,3}

Abstract

Mucormycosis is a pathologic entity, caused for molds belonging to mucorales order; among risk factors are hematological malignancies, hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT) and treatment with corticosteroids. This article reports the case of a 56-year-old male patient, Mexican mestizo, with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) and class 2 obesity (BMI 37.38). As a result of pancytopenia, the bone marrow studies disclosed myeloid hyperplasia and features of myelodysplasia. An outpatient allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (Allo-HSCT) was performed on January 14th, 2015. After engrafting successfully, on day + 250 pancytopenia due to graft loss ensued. Then, a second outpatient allo-HSCT was made, achieving 100% chimerism. During the aplastic phase, patient developed a rhinosinusal lesion in which the causal agent was identified as *Mucor* sp. It is important to consider HSCT secondary mucormycosis as a risk factor in hematological malignancies patients.

KEYWORDS: mucormycosis; myelodysplastic syndrome; immunosuppression; hematopoietic stem cell transplantation

Rev Hematol Mex. 2017 jul;18(3):134-138.

Mucormicosis rinosinusal invasiva después de un trasplante de células hematopoyéticas alogénicas por un síndrome mielodisplásico

Gastélum-Cano JM^{1,2}, Motolinia-Muñoz Y^{1,2}, Marín-Corte JC^{1,2}, Ortega-Amaya ER^{1,2}, Gordillo-Martínez AM^{1,2}, Ruiz-Argüelles GJ^{1,2,3}

Resumen

La mucormicosis es una enfermedad ocasionada por mohos integrantes del orden de los mucorales; entre los factores de riesgo de padecerla destacan las neoplasias malignas hematológicas, trasplante de células progenitoras hematopoyéticas y tratamiento con corticoesteroides.

¹ Laboratorios Clínicos de Puebla, Puebla, México.

² Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Puebla, México.

³ Centro de Hematología y Medicina Interna, Puebla, México.

Received: August 2017

Accepted: September 2017

Correspondence

Dr. Guillermo Ruiz Argüelles
gruiz1@hsctmexico.com

This article must be quoted

Gastélum-Cano JM, Motolinia-Muñoz Y, Marín-Corte JC, Ortega-Amaya ER, et al. Invasive rhinosinusal mucormycosis after hematopoietic stem cell transplantation in a myelodysplastic syndrome patient. Hematol Méx. 2017 jul;18(3):134-138.

Este artículo describe el caso de un paciente de 56 años de edad con diabetes mellitus de un año de evolución y obesidad clase II (IMC 37.38). Con motivo de estudio de pancitopenia se encontró médula hiper celular con hiperplasia de serie mieloide y cambios compatibles con mielodisplasia. Se le realizó trasplante de células hematopoyéticas alogénicas el 14 de enero de 2015. El día +250 sufrió pancitopenia secundaria a pérdida de injerto. Se efectuó un segundo trasplante que logró quimerismo del 100%. Durante la fase aplásica, padeció lesión rinosinusal en la que se identificó como agente causal *Mucor* sp. Es importante considerar las mucormicosis secundarias a trasplante como factor de riesgo en los pacientes con neoplasias hematológicas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: mucormicosis, síndrome mielodisplásico, inmunosupresión, trasplante de células madre hematopoyéticas.

¹ Laboratorios Clínicos de Puebla, Puebla, México.

² Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, Puebla, México.

³ Centro de Hematología y Medicina Interna, Puebla, México.

Correspondencia

Dr. Guillermo Ruiz Argüelles
gruiz1@hsctmexico.com

INTRODUCTION

Mucormycosis is a pathologic entity, caused by molds belonging to mucorales order with irregularly branched, dichotomous, ribbonlike, aseptate or pauciseptate hyphae, that reproduce sexual by producing zygospores; causing infections with sub-acute, acute and often rapidly progressing invasion.^{1,2} The *Mucoraceae* family (comprising *Absidia*, *Mucor*, *Rhizomucor* and *Rhizopus* Genus), is the most common associated with the disease.³

Mucorales use to behave as opportunist pathogens. However, they can infect immunocompetent patients. For that purpose, spores must get over histiocytes and neutrophils phagocytosis, which is the most important function for their elimination before developing its invasive form.⁴

Among risk factors for presenting this disease highlights uncontrolled diabetes specially with ketoacidosis manifestation, hematological malignancies, hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT), treatment with corticosteroids, deep trauma, burnings and chelation therapy with

deferoxamine in hemodialysis or transfusion-dependent patients.^{1,2}

In recent years, it has been observed an increasing incidence of mucormycosis, because of a growing of vulnerable population like cancer patients and solid organs or hematopoietic transplanted patients.^{1,4,5} This represents a serious health problem for patients in HSCT therapy for many diseases, due to the high mortality rates reported for this disease (59-80%).⁶⁻¹⁰ Additionally, identification of this etiological agent can be a challenge, owing to that the unique determinant criteria for mucormycosis diagnosis is direct observation of hypha in affected tissue and this could require invasive procedures (bronchoalveolar lavage or biopsy).⁵

Myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS) are a group of indolent clonal ailments which supposes abnormal hematopoietic totipotential cells, and co-exists hypercellular bone marrow with increased hematopoietic cells apoptosis, derived from cytokines excessive production¹¹ and that frequently results in cytopenia. Infections are common complicacies in MDS and contribute

significantly in mortality of this patients. It is believed that morphological abnormalities in neutrophils are accompanied by functional defects that increase susceptibility for bacterial and fungal infections.^{12,13}

The present case describes a male patient, 56 years old, Mexican mestizo, with risk factor of T2DM, severe obesity, immunosuppressive treatment repeatedly and MDS diagnosis, who developed rhinosinusal mucormycosis after two Allo-HSCT.

CASE REPORT

Male patient, 56 years old, Mexican mestizo with obesity class II (BMI 37.38), T2DM with one year of evolution, high blood pressure and hyperuricemia with 3 years of evolution. On December 2014, as a result of pancytopenia, bone marrow biopsy and aspiration was performed in which results showed: CD3 (+) in lymphocytes; CD20 (+) in scarce B-cells; CD34 (+) in endothelial cells; MPO (+) in myeloid cells and Ki67 (+) in 80% of total cells, with diagnosis of myeloid-megakaryocytic hyperplasia and compatible characteristics with myelodysplasia. An outpatient Allo-HSCT was done using cells obtained from a HLA-identical brother in January 14th of 2015; reaching an 85% chimerism on day (D) + 14 after transplant, posteriorly progressing to 100% (**Figure 1**). On D + 80 patient presented graft versus host disease (GVHD) symptoms grade I that responded to steroids treatment. Later, on D + 250 suffers evidently pancytopenia secondary to graft loss with down of chimerism to 19%. In October 10th of 2015, new bone marrow biopsy and aspiration was indicated. Histopathological results revealed: CD3 (+), CD34 (-), CD15 (+) y MPO (+) in myeloid lineage; CD20 (-) y CD117 (weak; 3.5%) findings of hypercellular BM with hyperplasia in myeloid lineage, compatible outcomes with use of granulocyte colony stimulating factor (G-CSF) additional to reticulin fibrosis grade II. A new

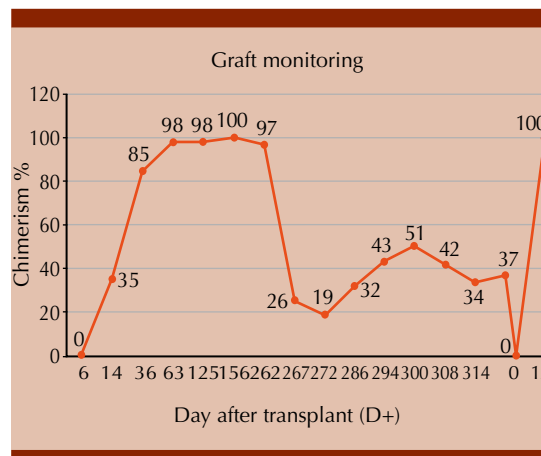


Figure 1. Dynamics of the chimerism after the two transplants.

outpatient Allo-HSCT with cells from the same blood relative was done in November 26th of 2015 achieving 100% of chimerism on D + 12; prophylactic drugs and low-dose of corticosteroids were administrated. In December 5th of 2015, patient presented a cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection with IgM (+) titles of 1.07 AU/mL and IgG (+) > 250 AU/mL, treated with ganciclovir. Then, during aplastic phase of the second transplant, patient developed a rhinosinusal lesion that afterwards extended to soft palate. Causal agent was identified as *Mucor* sp. in December 13th of 2015 through fungal culture and skin lesion KOH exam (**Figure 2**). Patient was admitted to Intensive Care Unit, where amphotericin B + posaconazol scheme was administrated. With partial response to antimycotic treatment and functional graft; patient presented sudden death for bronchospasm in January 3rd of 2016.

DISCUSSION

The present case shows a patient frankly predisposed to an infection for *Mucor* sp. First of all, MDS is a pathology that affects myeloid lineage; first line defense for spores eradication. On the other hand, therapies with corticosteroids, even though at low-dose, could have contributed in an

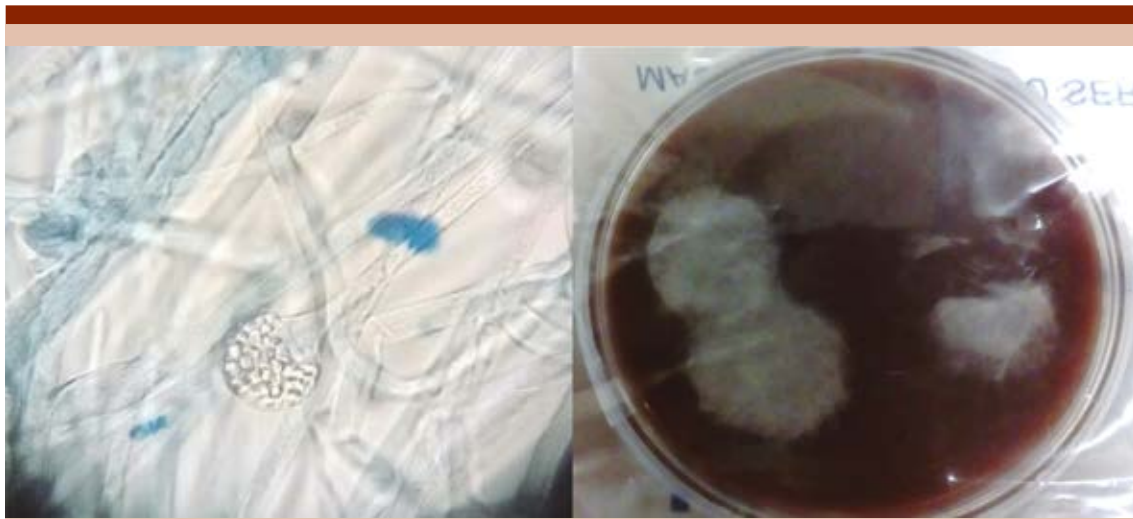


Figure 2. Picture of typical hyphae observed by optical microscopy using lactophenol cotton-blue stain on a culture sample taken from a white cotton candy colony; a rounded sporangium containing many rounded sporangiospores is shown.

important way to the immunosuppression during aplastic phase. Moreover, patient had a risk factor of T2DM accompanied by severe obesity that, although under a good glycemic control (such is this case), still being a predisposing characteristic. Despite its bad prognostic, it is not clear if this infection caused patient's death, since there is not additional post-mortem data. Nonetheless, this scenario evidences an event that must be considered in transplanted patients that present risk factors to avoid as far as possible this type of infection. Likewise, this report exhorts to work for improving prophylactic schemes and monitoring protocols that enhance survival of the patients. It is necessary to consider HSCT secondary mucormycosis, since albeit rare, they represent a serious threat for patients in vulnerable situation. We suggest to follow this disease in management, predisposing factors and epidemiological data in Mexico, because real incidence of mucormycosis in patients with hematological malignancies after HSCT is until these days unknown and related bibliography is limited for this country, and are based in one center reports.

REFERENCES

1. Farmakiotis F, Kontoyiannis DP. Mucormycoses. *Infect Dis Clin North Am* 2016 Mar;30(1):143-163. doi: 10.1016/j.idc.2015.10.011
2. Bonifaz A. *Micología Médica Básica*. México: McGrawHill, 2012;399-426.
3. Tristano A, Chollet ME, Willson M, et al. Mucormycosis. Reporte de tres casos. *Invest Clin* 2002;43(3):183-190.
4. García-Vidal C, Salavert-Lletí M. Inmunopatología de las micosis invasivas por hongos filamentosos. *Rev Iberoam Micol* 2014;31(4):219-28.
5. Robin C, Alanio A, Cordonnier C. Mucormycosis: a new concern in the transplant ward? *Curr Opin Hematol* 2014 Nov;21(6):482-490. doi: 10.1097/MOH.0000000000000082
6. Xhaard A, Lanternier F, Porcher R, et al. Mucormycosis after allogeneic haematopoietic stem cell transplantation: a French Multicentre Cohort Study (2003-2008). *Clin Microbiol Infect* 2012;18:E396-E400.
7. Skiada A, Pagano L, Groll A, et al. Zygomycosis in Europe: analysis of 230 cases accrued by the registry of the European Confederation of Medical Mycology (ECMM) working group on zygomycosis between 2005-2007. *Clin Microbiol Infect* 2011;17:1859-1867.
8. Kontoyiannis DP, Marr KA, Park BJ, et al. Prospective surveillance for invasive fungal infections in hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients, 2001-2006: overview of the Transplant-Associated Infection Surveil-

- lance Network (TRANSNET) Database. Clin Infect Dis 2010;50:1091-1100.
9. Neofytos D, Horn D, Anaissie E, et al. Epidemiology and outcome of invasive fungal infection in adult hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients: analysis of Multicenter Prospective Antifungal Therapy (PATH) Alliance registry. Clin Infect Dis 2009 Feb 1;48(3):265-273. doi: 10.1086/595846
10. Marr KA, Carter RA, Crippa F, et al. Epidemiology and outcome of mould infections in hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients. Clin Infect Dis 2002;34:909-917.
11. Ruiz-Argüelles GJ, Ruiz-Delgado GJ. Fundamentos de Hematología. Editorial Médica Panamericana, 2014;143.
12. Radsak M, Platzbecker U, Schmidt CS, Hofmann W-K, Nolte F. Infectious complications in patients with myelodysplastic syndromes: A review of the literature with emphasis on patients treated with 5-azacitidine. Eur J Haematol 2017;99:112-118. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejh.12883>
13. Fianchi L, Leone G, Posteraro B, et al. Impaired bactericidal and fungicidal activities of neutrophils in patients with myelodysplastic syndrome. Leuk Res 2012;36:331-333.