Large Pink Inclusions in Multiple Myeloma Cells

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Abstract

Objective: Several intracytoplasmic morphological changes in the plasma cells of multiple myeloma have been described previously, especially the Auer rod-like inclusions, but large pink inclusions have not been reported yet. In this paper, we intend to report a rare case of inclusions in multiple myeloma.

Methods: Bone marrow aspiration from the right superior iliac spine was examined twice. Cells were stained with “Wright-Giemsa” method and also analyzed by flow cytometry, immunohistochemical staining and fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH). Bone scan demonstrated bilateral ribs, thoracic vertebrae, with multiple low density shadows, which was confirmed subsequently as a lytic lesion on CT scanning. Complete blood count, serum chemistry and coagulation tests were also examined.

Results: Bone marrow aspirate from the right superior iliac spine at the time of myeloma diagnosis showed about 58.5% of all nucleated cells being plasma cells, of which many had large pink intracytoplasmic inclusions. Repeat bone marrow biopsy later showed persistence of these morphological findings. All of Flow cytometry, immunohistochemistry and FISH examination support the diagnosis of multiple myeloma.

Conclusion: This is the first time to report a multiple myeloma case with such giant pink inclusions. It is a rare and unique case. Due to its rarity, it remains unknown whether this morphological finding confers any prognostic implication.

Keywords: Multiple Myeloma (MM); Intracytoplasmic inclusion; M protein; Auer rod-like inclusions

Introduction

Cytoplasmic crystalline inclusion bodies in plasma cells have been repeatedly reported, mainly concentrated in the Auer rod-like inclusions. Additionally, spindle shaped, prismatic crystal, coarse azurophilic granules and so on have also been reported. Along with more MM patients were diagnosed, much more intracellular cytoplasmic inclusion bodies have been gradually reported, but the nature and prognosis of the inclusions are still not clear.

Case report

A 65-year-old woman presented with fatigue, dizziness, edema and weight loss. Bone scan demonstrated bilateral ribs, thoracic vertebrae, with multiple low density shadows, which was confirmed subsequently as a lytic lesion on CT scanning. Immunohistochemical results showed that CD38 (+), CD138 (+), CD15 (scattered+), CD20(+), CD79a(+), PC(+). The results of flow cytometry were consistent with those of immunohistochemistry. Fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH) displayed IGH41 % (+), TP53 (-). A complete blood count showed severe anemia. Haemoglobin was 67 g/L, white cell count 4.17×10⁹/L, neutrophils 1.95×10⁹/L, platelets 48×10⁹/L. Alb 28g/L, Ca 1.96mmol/L, Glu 6.9mmol/L, K 4.2mmol/L, ALT 14U/L, Cr 56 μmol/L with normal serum phosphate and bicarbonate levels and anion gap. Coagulation tests results: PT 15.1s, INR 1.32, APTT 22.1s, D-Dimer 9.22mg/L FEU, AT-III 66% (reference range 83-128). BNP 1149ng/L, NT-pro BNP 3242pg/ml. Serum protein electrophoresis (SPE): M protein 44.50g/L, IgG 41.96g/L, immunofixation electrophoresis (IFE): M protein 44.50g/L, IgG 41.96g/L, immunofixation electrophoresis (IFE): IgG(+), IgM(−), IgA(+). The patient was finally diagnosed with multiple myeloma, IgG type, Durie-Salmon III stage, ISS II stage.

A bone marrow aspiration revealed plasma cells constituted 58.5% of nucleated cells. The Figure 1 shows plasma cells demonstrating varied size, and the cytoplasm is filled with large or giant pink variable-shaped intracytoplasmic inclusions, which
push the nucleus to one side (panels A-D). Repeat bone marrow biopsy later showed persistence of these morphological findings.

Discussion

A few cases of multiple myeloma with intracytoplasmic inclusions are described in literature, of which most are described as Auer rod-like inclusions, other forms include needle-like, coarse, azurophilic granules, prismatic, spindle shaped, spherical, cylindrical shape and so on [1]. The varied crystalline intracytoplasmic inclusions can also be seen in other types of hematologic disorders, such as chronic lymphocytic leukemia, lymphoplasmacytic lymphoma, mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue lymphomas and acute myeloid leukemia [2], but still now, no reports have described large pink inclusions in any type of cells.

Since the first description of inclusions in myeloma by Steinmann in a case of a 51-year-old woman with a parasternal tumor [3], cytoplasmic crystalline inclusion bodies in neoplastic or mature plasma cells have been described. Steinmann was also the first time to prove that these inclusions do not originate from depositions of immunoglobulins but have been more recently confirmed to be of lysosomal origin (fusionated lysosomal granules), given their strong a-N-esterase activity and negativity with antibodies against immunoglobulin or light chain. Following that report, many more cases have been described [1,2,4-9]. Pooling together the cases reviewed by Hutter [1] and other reports since then up to now, including our cases, it appears that this phenomenon is rare and is always associated with a IgGk-type paraprotein, only one case of λ light chain restriction [4-12]. Although plasma cell myeloma with these inclusion bodies has been considered to be a morphologic variant and has intrigued investigators, the prognostic value of this morphologic variant is currently unclear [9-12]. Additionally, there is still no known cytogenetic association nor any particular immunophenotypic characteristic relationship.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time to report a multiple myeloma case with such giant-variable shaped pink intracytoplasmic inclusions. Only with the description of more cases in the future can we then be able to draw some conclusions in this regard.

References