

Bleomycin treatment for lymphangioma

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Abstract

Lymphangiomas are uncommon congenital malformations of the lymphatic system, that involve the skin and subcutaneous tissues. Of the several types of treatment, surgical excision has been the preferred. There is a high recurrence rate because lymphangiomas tend to infiltrate the surrounding tissues. The bleomycin is a cytotoxic antitumoral antibiotic, that causes modifications of DNA. It has been also successfully used in intralesional injection treatment of cystic hygromas and haemangiomas, based specifically on a high sclerosing effect on vascular endothelium. We report the cases of five patients, with congenital lymphangioma, localized on the leg, in cervical and latero-thoracal region, treated with repeated intralesional bleomycin injections. The treatment indication was given by the location of this lesions and the infiltration of the surrounding vital tissues, that made the complete surgical excision impossible. Intralesional injection of bleomycin into the lymphangiomas was given at a dose, not exceeding 0,5 mg/ kg of body weight, at intervals of 4 weeks. Complete resolution (n=4) or significant improvement (n=1) occurred in all patients treated. No other treatment was needed. We didn't notice local or general adverse effects. With this method we set the purpose to treat effectively this congenital malformations, obviating the need for invasive primary surgery or systemic treatment regimens. Toward other methods, intra-lesional bleomycin injections have a minimal risk of side effects (ulceration, pulmonary fibrosis).

Key words: lymphangiomas, intralesional bleomycin injections

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