RESEARCH ARTICLE

A CASE REPORT OF BERNARD-SOULIER SYNDROME IN DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS OF IMMUNE THROMBOCYTOPENIC PURPURA.

Lina Ahmed Wasfi, Abdul Rahman Hassan Issa, Shatha Ahmad Awad Aljuhani, Ruaa Omar Nughays, Walaa Mohammed Hafez Hassan and Tyseer Hassan Ahmed Hassan.

Manuscript Info

Abstract

Bernard-Soulier Syndrome (BSS) is a rare hereditary disorder. Platelets in patients with BSS are unable to adhere, leading to an increased bleeding tendency. BSS cases are often misdiagnosed as idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP). We report here a seven years old girl diagnosed as Bernard-Soulier syndrome with homozygous deletion of 39 nucleotides in the exon 2 of GP1BA. Bernard–Soulier syndrome should be considered before the patient is diagnosed with immune thrombocytopenia.

Introduction:

Bernard-Soulier syndrome (BSS) was first known by two French hematologists – Jean Bernard and pierresoulier. They found out a patient from a consanguineous family with severe bleeding episodes, thrombocytopenia and very large platelets [1]. It is a rare hereditary disorder (1:1000000) [2]. Platelets in patients with BSS are unable to adhere, leading to an increased bleeding tendency [3]. BSS is a platelet function disorder, transmitted in an autosomal recessive manner. Caused by defects in the glycoprotein (GP) Ib/IX/V complex [4]. These genes stand for a group of linked proteins normally found on the surface of the platelets [5]. Composed of four subunits, GPIba disulphide-linked to two GPIbaβ subunits, GPIX and GPV in a ratio of 2:4:2:1, respectively [6]. The genes for each of these subunits have been cloned and are located in Chromosome (ch). 17p12 (GPIBA) [6], ch.22q11.2 (GPIBB) [7], ch3q21 (GP9) [8] and ch.3q29 (GP5) [9]. BSS cases are often misdiagnosed as idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP) [5]. In this case report, we present one girl with causative mutations in GP1BA.

Case History:

A seven years old Saudi girl previously healthy until the age of 5 years old when she presented on 15/1/2015 complaining of petechiae all over face, chest, arms, abdomen, and legs. Another systemic review was unremarkable. She was not on any medications. On examination she was conscious, alert, oriented, not distress. No enlarged lymph nodes were palpable in any part of her body. Her abdomen was not distended, and her spleen and liver were not palpable other systemic examinations were unremarkable.

Laboratory finding were; CBC (HG: 11.7, RBC: 4.19, WBC: 11.2, PLATELET: 80). Blood film: many large and giant platelets seen. Serologic examinations for Human Immunodeficiency Virus and hepatitis B and C were all negative. Also, ANA and direct coombs test were negative.

Corresponding Author:-Lina Ahmed Wasfi.
The patient diagnosed as idiopathic thrombocytopenia. Received IVIG and discharged in good condition. In addition, she had multiple admissions due to the same complain petechiae and low platelet count. She received IVIG many times, and she responded as platelet count increase at least by 30,000 but after two to four weeks platelets drop again even below 10,000. There was no respond to steroids. She responded to anti-D once for four weeks. She received four doses of rituximab there was no respond until 16 weeks. Bone marrow aspiration and biopsy were done on 30/3/2015 before receiving steroids; the result was cellular normal marrow. Normal megakaryocytes content on the marrow. No pathology on the marrow to explain the thrombocytopenia.

She was diagnosed as chronic ITP with frequent admission and poor response to treatment and due to hospital logistic issues platelets aggregation and flow cytometry not done. The doctor arranged an appointment for follow-up and genetic analysis for Bernard-Soulier syndrome. The result of Molecular genetic analysis of the genes GP1BA, GP1BB, GP9 showed a presence of a homozygous deletion of 39 nucleotides in the exon 2 of GP1BA. Finally, she diagnosed as Bernard-Soulier Syndrome (BSS).

Discussion:
Bernard-Soulier syndrome is an autosomal recessive disorder. Bernard-Soulier syndrome affects both males and females. In Bernard-Soulier syndrome, thrombocytopenia is associated with morphologically abnormal large platelets and platelet dysfunction. The clinical manifestation is variable and includes purpura, epistaxis, gingival bleeding, menorrhagia, occasional gastrointestinal bleeding, hematoma, or hematuria. The diagnosis of platelet function disorders needs a detailed medical history and a series of laboratory tests.

In people with Bernard-Soulier syndrome:
- The bleeding time is difficult to perform in young children.
- The closure time is prolonged.
- Larger platelets.
- Platelets appear on the blood film.
- There are usually fewer platelets than normal.
- Platelets do not clump together normally in the presence of ristocetin.
- GPIb/IX/V is not detectable by flow cytometry.

Reasons to suspect hereditary thrombocytopenia (See Table 1)
Classification schemes for hereditary thrombocytopenia (See Table 2)
On (Table 3 and 4) showed Mutations Identified and some diseases associated in Patients with Bernard-Soulier Syndrome, their ages ranged from 1 to 70 years. They had platelet counts from 22 to 178 × 10^9/L. The mean value of MPV was 12.6 fL, with a range from 10.4 to 17.2 fL.

Mutation of the glycoprotein (GP) Ib/IX complex associated with Bernard-Soulier Syndrome (See Table 5)

Idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura, leukemia should be included in the differential diagnosis of patients with Bernard-Soulier syndrome. Patients with idiopathic thrombocytopenic may have detectable antiplatelet antibodies. In the past, Inherited thrombocytopenia were, considered very rare. Patients are subject to misdiagnosis of autoimmune thrombocytopenic instead of hereditary thrombocytopenia and inappropriate therapy, such as steroid treatment and splenectomy.

Proposed definitions of ITP (Table 6)
Proposed criteria for assessing response to ITP treatments (Table 7)
Individual agents for treatment of ITP and the time to the first and peak responses if using the reported dose range (Table 8)
Refractory ITP (Table 9)

Here, we report one girl with Bernard-Soulier syndrome (BSS) who missed diagnosed as ITP. She demonstrated typical BSS features such as giant platelets and petechial rash. In Conclusion, Bernard-Soulier syndrome should be considered before the patient is diagnosed with immune thrombocytopenia.
Table 1: Reasons to suspect hereditary thrombocytopenia.[11]

- Lack of platelet response to therapies including steroids, IVIG, IV anti-D, and splenectomy and, rituximab.
- A family history of thrombocytopenia.
- Abnormal size of platelets on blood film.
- Abnormal bleeding time in comparison with platelet count.
- Onset at birth.
- Associated features such as high tone hearing loss, absent radii, mental retardation, renal failure, cataracts, or the development of leukemia.

Table 2: Classification schemes for hereditary thrombocytopenias.[11]

- Thrombocytopenia due to poor production or accelerated destruction.
- Mode of inheritance: X-linked (wiskottaldrich syndrome) or autosomal dominant.
- Platelet size on smear: very large, normal, or small (Wiskott Aldrich Syndrome); other findings, e.g. Dohle-like bodies in neutrophils.
- Associated features including clinical and laboratory findings:
  1. findings on exam or by history, e.g., absent radii, renal failure, hearing loss (May Hegglin Anomaly)
  2. laboratory abnormalities, e.g., flow cytometry for platelet glycoprotein expression, platelet function testing, assessment of the von Willebrand factor multimer composition.

Table 3: Mutations Identified in Patients with BSS.[19]

| Gene mutation | Nucleotide substitutions | Amino acid Change | Genotype | Initial diagnosis | Splenectomy | References |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------------------|----------|------------------|-------------|------------|
| GPIbα mutation | deletion of 39 nucleotides in the exon 2 | Homozygous | ITP | - | Our Patient |
| 7F | | | | | |
| 41F | 3998-3999delTG | Premature termination | Homozygous | ITP | + | [12] |
| 43M | 4444insT | Premature termination | Compound heterozygous | ITP | + | [12] |
| 26F | 4447C>A (TCA>TAA) | Ser444Stop | Homozygous | ITP | - | [13] |
| 34F | 4464delA | Premature termination | Homozygous | ITP | + | [14] |
| 14F | 4464delA | Premature termination | Homozygous | ? | Oophorectomy | [15] |
| GPIbβ mutation | 777C>T (CGC>TGC) | Arg17Cys | Heterozygous | GPD | - | [16] |
| 37F | 991A>G (TAC>TGC) | Tyr88Cys | Compound heterozygous | ITP | - | [18] |
| 6F | 949C>G(CCG>CGG) | Pro74Arg | Homozygous | BSS | - | [17] |
| 37F | 1050G>C(GCC>CCC) | Ala10Pro | Compound heterozygous | ITP | - | [19] |
| 20F | 991A>G (TAC>TGC) | Tyr88Cys | Homozygous | BSS | - | [19] |
| 37M | 1096G>A(TGG>TA G) | Trp123Stop | Homozygous | ITP | + | S.K., et al, unpublished data |
| 1moF | del 22q11.2 | unknown | Compound heterozygous | BSS | - | [20] |
| 7M   | Homozygous | BSS  | [62] |
|------|------------|------|------|
| 4M   | Homozygous | BSS  | [62] |

**GPIX mutation**

| 7M   | 1856T>C (TTT>TCT) | Phe55Ser | Homozygous | ITP  | +   | [24] |
|------|------------------|----------|-------------|------|-----|-----|
| 4M   | 1910G>A (TGT>TAT) | Cys73Tyr | Homozygous  | BSS  | -   | [22] |
| 31M  | 1910G>A (TGT>TAT) | Cys73Tyr | Homozygous  | ITP  | -   | [24] |
| 46M  | 1982G>A (TGT>TAT) | Cys97Tyr | Homozygous  | ITP  | +   | [23] |
| 30F  | 2076G>A (TGG>TGA) | Trp127Stop | Homozygous | ITP  | +   | [14,40] |
| 39F  | 2076G>A (TGG>TGA) | Trp127Stop | Homozygous | ITP  | -   | [24] |
| 44F  | 2076G>A (TGG>TGA) | Trp127Stop | Homozygous | ITP  | +   | [24] |

*Nucleotide numbering for GPIb_, GPIb_, and GPIX is according to GenBank accession numbers M22403, U07983, and M80478, respectively. GP indicates glycoprotein; ITP, idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura; GPD, giant platelet disorders; BSS, Bernard-Soulier syndrome.
†Originally reported as codon 126.

Table 4: Bernard-Soulier Syndrome Associations

| Association                           | Age         | Gender | Reference |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------|-----------|
| Angiodysplasia                        | 39 years old| Female | [31]      |
|                                       | -           | Female | [32]      |
|                                       | 14 years old| Male   | [33]      |
| Angiodysplasia + breast cancer + Hepatitis C | 48 years old| Female | [34]      |
| Tuberculosis                          | 14 years old| Female | [35]      |
| Hepatitis                             | 42 years old| Female | [36]      |
| Coronary artery disease               | 68 years old| Male   | [37]      |
| Atherosclerosis and unstable angina   | 66 years old| Male   | [38]      |
| Pregnancy                             | Variable    | Female | [39]      |
| Aquagenicurticarial                   | 18 years old| Male   | [40]      |
| Developmental dysplasia of her left hip (DDH) | 40 years old| Female | [46]      |
| Acute myeloid leukemia                | 21 years old| Female | [45]      |
| Myocardial infarction                 | 60 and 64 years old| Male | [26]      |

Table 5: Mutation of the glycoprotein (GP) Iib/IX complex associated with Bernard-Soulier Syndrome

| Mutation     | Nucleotide Substitution | Amino acid change | References |
|--------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| GPIbα Mutations | 3172delA                 | Premature termination | [63]       |
|              | 3233-3236delTGAG         | Premature termination | [64]       |
|              | 3285C>T                  | Leu57Phe          | [65]       |
|              | 3309T>C                  | Cys65Arg          | [66]       |
|              | 3343delIT                | Premature termination | [61]       |
|              | 3502T>C                  | Leu129Pro         | [68-69]    |
|              | 3583C>T                  | Ala156Val         | [70-71-72] |
|              | 3621-3656del             | Premature termination | [72]       |
|              | 3651-3653delCTC          | del Leu179        | [73]       |
|              | 3741T>A                  | Cys209Ser         | [74-75]    |
|              | 3998-3999delTG           | Premature termination | [12]       |
|              | 4145G>A                  | Trp343stop        | [76]       |
|              | 4444insT                 | Premature termination | [12-14-75] |
Table 6: Proposed definitions of disease\textsuperscript{[30]}

| Primary idiopathic thrombocytopenic |
|-------------------------------------|
| It is an autoimmune disorder characterized by isolated thrombocytopenia (peripheral blood platelet count $<100 \times 10^9/L$) in the absence of other causes that may be associated with thrombocytopenia. No confirmed clinical or laboratory parameters are currently available to establish its diagnosis with accuracy. |

| Secondary ITP |
|----------------|
| All immune-mediated thrombocytopenia except primary ITP* |

| Phases of the disease |
|-----------------------|
| Newly diagnosed ITP: within three months from diagnosis |
| Persistent ITP: between 3 to 12 months from diagnosis. |
| Chronic ITP: More than 12 months. |
| Severe ITP: Presence of bleeding symptoms at presentation need treatment, or occurrence of new bleeding symptoms requiring additional therapeutic intervention with a different platelet-enhancing agent or an increased dose. |

Table 7: Proposed criteria for assessing response to ITP treatments\textsuperscript{[30]}

| Quality of response |
|---------------------|
| CR: platelet count $>100 \times 10^9/L$ and absence of bleeding. |
| R: Platelet count $>30 \times 10^9/L$ and at least 2-fold increase the baseline count and absence of bleeding. |
| Time to response: time from starting treatment to time of achievement of CR or R. |
| NR: platelet count $<30 \times 10^9/L$ or less than 2-fold increase of baseline platelet count or bleeding |
| Loss of CR or R: Platelet count $<100 \times 10^9/L$ or bleeding (from CR) or $<30 \times 10^9/L$ or less than 2-fold increase of baseline platelet count or bleeding (from R) |

| Timing of assessment of response to ITP treatments |
| Variable depends on the type of treatment (see Table 8). |

| Duration of response |
| Measured from the achievement of CR or R to loss of CR or R. |
For response criteria in refractory ITP, see Table 9.

### Table 8: Individual agents for treatment of ITP and the time to the first and peak responses if using the reported dose range

| Agent/treatment | Reported dose range | Time to initial response* | Time to peak response* |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Prednisone      | 1-4 mg/kg PO daily x 1-4 wk | 4-14 d | 7-28 d |
| Dexamethasone   | 40 mg PO or IV daily x 4 d for 4-6 courses every 14-28 d | 2-14 d | 4-28 d |
| IVIg            | 0.4-1 g/kg per dose IV (1-5 doses) | 1-3 d | 2-7 d |
| Anti-D          | 75 ug/kg per dose IV | 1-3 d | 3-7 d |
| Rituximab       | 375 mg/m2 per dose IV (4 weekly doses) | 7-56 d | 14-180 d |
| Splenectomy     | Laparoscopic | 1-56 d | 7-56 d |
| Vincristine     | up to 2 mg/dose IV (4-6 weekly doses) | 7-14 d | 7-42 d |
| Vinblastine     | 0.1 mg/kg per dose IV (6 weekly doses) | 7-14 d | 7-42 d |
| Danazol         | 400-800 mg PO daily | 14-90 d | 28-180 d |
| Azathioprine    | 2 mg/kg PO daily | 30-90 d | 30-180 d |
| AMG53           | 3-10 ug/kg weekly SC | 5-14 d | 14-60 d |
| Eltrombopag     | 50-75 mg PO daily | 7-28 d | 14-90 d |

In the times to the initial and peak responses, the first number of days is the first time that a response could be reasonably expected and the second number of days is the time after which a response to this particular agent becomes less likely when administered at the dose and schedule listed in the table. Dosages, where not given on kilogram/body weight basis, are intended for adults.

PO indicates per oral administration; IV, intravenous infusion; and SC, subcutaneous infusion.

### Table 9: Refractory ITP

**Definition (all should be met)**

- Failure to achieve at least R or loss of R after splenectomy
- Need of treatment(s) (including, but not limited to, low dose of corticosteroids) to minimize the risk of clinically significant bleeding. Need of on-demand or adjunctive therapy alone does not qualify the patient as refractory.
- Primary ITP confirmed by excluding other supervened causes of thrombocytopenia.

**Definition of on-demand therapy**

Any therapy used to temporarily increase the platelet count sufficiently to safely perform invasive procedures or in case of major bleeding or trauma.

**Definition of adjunctive therapy**

Any non-ITP specific therapy that may decrease bleeding (e.g., antifibrinolytic agents, hormonal agents, DDAVP, recombinant factor VIIa, fibrin sealants).

Platelet transfusion is also included.

**Definition of response to therapy in refractory ITP**

- Ability to maintain a platelet count sufficient to prevent clinically significant bleeding
- Ability to decrease toxic therapy (e.g., corticosteroids) does not qualify for response but should be reported

**Definition of response to on-demand therapy**

Control of bleeding in the specific situation

Achievement of a platelet count sufficient to perform procedure or minimize bleeding from trauma.
DDAVP indicates deamino arginine vasopressin.
*May not be applicable in children or in patients with accessory spleen.
†Bleeding symptoms measured by a validated scale whenever possible (requires further studies).
‡Specific platelet thresholds cannot be provided, but in most instances, a platelet count of 50-70 x 10^9/L would fulfill this criterion.
§A strict definition of response in terms of predefined platelet count cannot be given and may not be appropriate when considering the risk/benefit ratio in refractory ITP, because the trade off between efficacy of a specific treatment and its short- and long-term toxicity varies among patients.

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