Modern Treatment of Acute Myocardial Infarction with ST-segment Elevation Complicated with Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest

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Abstract

Background: The most common cause of early death in acute myocardial infarction with ST elevation are malignant heart rhythm disorders, generally occurring in the first four hours of myocardial infarction. The incidence of ventricular fibrillation is greatest in the early stage of the myocardial infarction, and sudden cardiac deaths occur most often in outpatient conditions.

Case reports: This paper presents a patient whose first manifestation of coronary artery disease was myocardial infarction with ST elevation complicated by early ventricular fibrillation. Rapid measures of cardiopulmonal resuscitation enabled quick establishment of normal sinus rhythm. Primary percutaneous intervention was performed, with revascularization of artery responsible for acute myocardial infarction. In order to reduce ischemic brain damage, therapeutic hypothermia was applied since the patient was presented in post-reanimation coma.

Conclusion: Better treatment of patients with cardiac arrest in outpatient conditions and faster revascularization of the infarct artery are crucial for a reduction of mortality in acute myocardial infarction.

Key words acute myocardial infarction, cardiac arrest, modern treatment

Background

In spite of significant progress in both diagnosis and therapy, intrahospital mortality of ST segment myocardial infarction (STEMI) is still significantly high (between 4 % and 12 %), while one-year mortality in angiographic registries is 10 %. Ventricular fibrillation (VF) is still the most frequent cause of sudden death in patients with STEMI, occurring in 80 % of all VF in the first four hours of myocardial infarction. Since this arrhythmia early occurs most commonly in the course of myocardial infarction, sudden deaths usually happen out of hospital. Fast defibrillation is the main determinant of survival in patients with VF and urgent coronary angiography with primary percutaneous intervention (pPCI) is the treatment of choice in patients with cardiac arrest in the course of STEMI. If there are no contraindications, therapeutic hypothermia is indicated in early phase after resuscitation in patients in postreanimation coma.

Case report

We present a male patient aged 37 who experienced the out-of-hospital syncopa on the day of admission to the Emergency Hospital of the Clinical Center of Serbia. He was not injured since his was held by his wife standing by his side. Patient’s wife started external cardiac massage and since Emergency Medical Service arrived and did not register pulses on big body arteries, cardiopulmonal resuscitation was continued. Electrocardiogram had shown VF which was terminated with an asynchronous DC shock. After the cardiac rhythm was established, electrocardiogram showed anterolateral STEMI and the patient was referred to Emergency Hospital and then admitted to the Urgent Cardiology Department of the Clinical Center of Serbia.

On admission, the patient was unconscious, intubated, insufficiently breathing, afebrile, acyanotic. He was in sinus rhythm, tachycardia was observed, with gallop rhythm and third heart sound. Normal breathing sound was registered. He was hypertensive (160/100 mmHg) and tachycardic (Heart rate: 110/min). Admission electrocardiogram had shown wider QRS complexes with right branch block and ST segment elevation in anterolateral lead series. (Figure 1.)

Shortly after admission a nasogastric probe was placed and loading doses of Acetylsalicylic acid (300mg) and Ticagrelor (180mg) were administered. Since the patient was in cardiac arrest and resuscitated, his bleed-
ing risk was high and Pantoprasol was administered through nasogastric probe. Due to agitation and insufficient breathing, sedation with Propofol and Midasolam was administered and assisted mechanical ventilation was performed. The patient was urgently transferred to the catheterisation laboratory for coronary angiography and pPCI.

Coronary angiography revealed a two-vessel coronary artery disease. An occlusive lesion in the medial segment of left descendent coronary artery (LAD) spreading to the first diagonal brunch was observed along with two significant stenoses in medial and distal segments of the right coronary artery (RCA) (Figure 2). Revascularisation of LAD with implantation of two drug eluting stents in LAD was performed (drug-eluting stent-DES). Transient hypotension was registered in cath lab, so revascularisation of RCA was performed with implantation of two DES (Figure 3.). Electrocardiogram after revascularization had shown a resolution of ST segment elevation in anterolateral lead series, with loss of right brunch block. (Figure 4).

Upon arrival from catheterization laboratory the patient was still unconscious, on assisted mechanical ventilation, normotensive (110/70 mmHg). Laboratory analysis showed increased values of markers of cardiac necrosis (CK 1017 IU/L; Tn I 0.9 ng/ml), increased values of total cholesterol and disturbed fraction of cholesterol (Holesterol - 6.34; HDL holestrol 0.94, LDL holestrol 4.68 mmol/L). Echocardiogram had shown the left ventricle normal in size and shape (EDD/ESD- 52/37 mm). The analysis of regional kinetics revealed hypokinesis of left ventricle apex and ejection fraction measured according to Simpson was approximately 50 %.

Neurologic examination was performed along with endocranial CT, and after exclusion of contraindications therapeutic hypothermia was initiated and continued during next 24 hours followed by constant hemodynamic and laboratory monitoring. After 24 hours of therapeutic hypothermia gradual rewarming was initiated, intravenous sedation (started before hypothermia) was stopped; then the patient became conscious. He was extubated and stable throughout hospitalization. He was discharged to outpatient treatment with double antiplatelet therapy (Acetyl salicylic acid 100 mg and Ticagrelor 2x90 mg), beta blocker, ACE inhibitor and Rosuvastatin.

On follow-up, the patient was asymptomatic, with high tolerance for physical efforts. A new echocardiogram showed no disturbances in regional kinetics.

**Discussion**

Considering that STEMI in our patient was complicated with out-of-hospital cardiac arrest it is clear that improvement of pre-hospital care of STEMI patients is crucial for their better survival. According to the latest recommendations for STEMI published in 2017, it is evident that all medical professionals should be trained and familiar with the use of defibrillators and be able to maintain vital functions, which was the case with our patient. Fast defibrillation is the main determinant of survival in patients with VF. If cardiopulmonary resuscitation measures are applied in patients with VF and DC shock is applied in the first four minutes, the survival rate is up to 30%, while in patients in whom cardiopulmonary resuscitation and DC shock were applied in the
course of 10 minutes the survival rate is up to 2 %.4 Pre-
hospital care for patients with STEMI should be im-
proved by better regional network development in or-
der to ensure rapid reperfusion therapy and pPCI avail-
able to as many patients as possible.1 According to mod-
ern recommendations, patients in whom pPCI is to be
performed should receive dual antiplatelet therapy
(Acetyl salicylic acid and P2Y12 inhibitor), so our patient
in addition to Aspirin was loaded with a dose of 180 mg
Ticagrelor (non-thienopyridine antithrombotic drug
with dual mechanism of action). Clopidogrel is indicated
only if Ticagrelor or Prasugrel are unavailable or contra-
indicated.7 It has been shown earlier that patients after
prolonged resuscitation can suffer more frequently from
bleeding complications, and in accordance with this ex-
perience, our patient was protected with Pantoprazole
through a nasogastric probe. According to 2017 ESC
Guidelines for the management of acute myocardial in-
farction in patients presenting with STEMI, for those
presenting with out of hospital cardiac arrest in the
course of STEMI, emergency coronary angiogram and
pPCI is a therapeutic treatment of choice, and our pa-
tient was treated this way. Revascularization of the in-
farction artery with implantation of drug-releasing
stents has an advantage over bare metal stents, espe-
cially when there is possibility of stent thrombosis.8 Ac-
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