Neuromuscular Diseases

PSEUDOMYOTONIA AS A CLINICAL FEATURE OF SEVERE PRIMARY HYPOTHYROIDISM

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INTRODUCTION

The myotonic disorders are a group of rare, heterogeneous syndromes presenting with clinical and/or electrical myotonia. Clinical myotonia is characterized by the failure of muscle relaxation after activation. Several forms of myotonia are described in literature, with the prevalence of the congenital forms. An uncommon cause of Myotonia, is primary Hypothyroidism.

CASE REPORT

We present the case of a 50 year old patient, that came in our ER complaining an eight month history of swallowing and articulating difficulty,and stiffness of body muscles. On hand shaking the patient showed a delayed relaxation of the hand muscles. On inspection his muscles had an athletic appearance. Head and cervical MRI were normal. The EMG findings suggested a myotonic syndrome. In the laboratory findings, high levels of Creatine Phosphokinase (12456 UI), Lactic Dehydrogenase (1460 UI) and a very high level of TSH hormone (173.432 mU/L) were found, with low levels of T3 and T4, indicating that our patient was suffering from a serious hypothyroidism condition.

Hormone replacement therapy with TSH hormone was initiated, and we noticed an immediate improvement of the clinical situation. After 4-5 months since the beginning of the therapy, our patient refers no longer swallowing difficulty, and no more muscles stiffness. His Myotonic syndrome was totally reversible since the thyroid hormone replacement therapy.

DISCUSSION:

Myotonic disorders are more often found among young patients. Finding Myotonic features in a 50 year old age patient, should lead us to investigate secondary cause, such as primary or secondary Hypothyroidism.

CONCLUSION: Severe hypothyroidism can mimic Mytonic Syndrome.