Covid-19 as a second hit for Anti-phospholipid syndrome

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Background

Anti-phospholipid syndrome (APS) is an autoimmune disorder characterized by venous and arterial thrombosis, usually in setting of underlying autoimmune disorders. Here, we present a case of anti-phospholipid syndrome post covid infection.

Case Presentation

41-year-old lady presented to the ER with complaints of left sided facial droop for 3-day duration. On further evaluation, she was found to have subacute ischemic stroke and was managed with anticoagulation and supportive treatment. Past medical history is significant for a recent diagnosis of Covid infection and for subsequent development of lower extremity deep vein thrombosis (DVT). She was started on anticoagulation with rivaroxaban for the DVT. However, anticoagulation had to be held due to hemorrhagic transformation of the ischemic stroke. Further work up for young stroke revealed having elevated PTT, elevated titers for anticardiolipin Ab IgG and IgM, positive lupus anticoagulant by screen and confirmatory tests leading to diagnosis of APS. She was readmitted a few days later for acute DVT of left lower extremity and underwent thrombectomy. Warfarin was initiated to bridge from heparin in setting of acquired anti-phospholipid syndrome. The goal INR 2.5-3.5 was reached uneventfully, and she was discharged home.

Conclusions

In Anti-phospholipid syndrome, patients typically have a history of multiple pregnancy loss and underlying autoimmune disorders. Our patient has no typical risk factors for anti-phospholipid syndrome and is likely triggered by covid infection. Acquired APS in setting of recent covid infection needs to be considered in the setting of recurrent thrombotic events.