Intrathecal baclofen treatment in early stage of severe brain damaged subjects: Case-report and literature review

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Introduction.– Intrathecal baclofen is known as an effective treatment of muscular hypertonia in chronic stages of vascular or traumatic brain damaged subjects [1]. Its interest in early management is supported by its effects on neurovegetative crisis [2].

Materials and methods.– A 61-year-old female patient in persistent vegetative-nervous state two months after a bilateral anterior cerebral artery stroke, presented with spastic tetraplegia and equine retracted feet despite an optimal antispastic treatment (oral treatment and botulinum toxin injections).

Considering a global muscle hypertonia with a mean score (MAS) of 3.8 on inferior limbs and 3 on superior limbs, and after positive intrathecal baclofen test, pump implantation was decided on day 90 after stroke.

Results.– An improvement of hypertonia of 2 points (MAS) on inferior limbs and of 1.4 on superior limbs facilitating the patient’s nursing and bed positioning, as well as an improvement of WHIM of 21 points were noted one week after treatment. No complication was reported.

Discussion.– A diffuse muscle hypertonia with secondary neuro-orthopedic complications can appear in early stages after a severe brain damage. Our case emphasizes the importance of screening and early management of those muscle tonus troubles, with particular interest in early intrathecal baclofen treatment.

References

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Adverse events of chronic intrathecal baclofen infusion: A descriptive one-year follow-up of 158 consecutive patients followed during one year

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Objective.– To describe the adverse events (AE) occurring after intrathecal baclofen (ITB) pump placement.

Patients and methods.– We prospectively collected all the AE occurring in patients receiving ITB via a pump, from the rehabilitation setting of R.-Poirier Hospital during 2010.

Results.– 158 patients were enrolled, mean age 46 years and 65% male. 128 patients were former implanted (P1) and 30 had a pump placement during 2010: 20 new-implanted (NI) and 10 replacements (R). Most of patients were SCI patients (44 paraplegic and 23 tetraplegic) and MS patients (45). 18% of the patients had one or more complications (38 complications). For a total follow-up of 1665 months, there were 0.023 complications per pump-month.