CAP with Respiratory Failure in the Asia-Pacific Region: Leptospirosis and Scrub Typhus

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Objective: To outline common tropical infection causes of severe community acquired pneumonia (CAP) with respiratory failure among indigenous population and international travelers returned from Asia-Pacific region, and the management of these patients.

Case presentations: Case A is a man who presented with severe pneumonia and hemoptysis caused by leptospirosis. Case B is a man who presented with Streptococcus pneumoniae bacteremia and scrub typhus at Siriraj Hospital, Bangkok, Thailand.

Discussion: Leptospirosis and scrub typhus are emerging as common causes of severe CAP. Pulmonary involvement is common in severe leptospirosis and scrub typhus. ARDS is the most severe complication of scrub typhus. Severe pulmonary involvement associated with leptospirosis, including lung hemorrhage, is a major cause of death in leptospirosis. Neither high dose of dexamethasone or desmopressin adjunctive therapy reduced the mortality of this syndrome.

Conclusion: Physician should aware that leptospirosis and scrub typhus can cause severe CAP. Travelers to endemic areas are also at risk of these infections. Early recognition and appropriate treatment reduce morbidity and mortality.