Case Report

Osteomalacia Induced by Adefovir in Patient With Hepatitis B

Mayra Nathali Rivas Zavaleta, Sonia Guayambuco Romero, Marcelo Calabozo Raluy, Fernando Pérez Ruiz

Servicio de Reumatología, Hospital Cruces, Barakaldo, Vizcaya, Spain

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ABSTRACT

Osteomalacia is defined as a defect in mineralization of the bone matrix. We describe the case of a patient with chronic hepatitis B infection in whom treatment with adefovir induced renal phosphate loss with intense and sustained hypophosphatemia which derived in symptomatic osteomalacia.

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RESUMEN

La osteomalacia se define como un defecto en la mineralización de la matriz ósea. Describimos el caso de un paciente con infección crónica por virus de la hepatitis B en el que el tratamiento con adefovir indujo una pérdida renal de fosfato con hipofosfatemia intensa y mantenida que derivó en osteomalacia sintomática.

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Introduction

Adefovir is an antiretroviral drug used for the treatment of patients with chronic infection with hepatitis B. Among its adverse effects one finds nephrotoxicity, although this usually occurs when high doses (60–120 mg/day) are employed.1 The currently recommended dose is approximately 10 mg/day PO, which minimizes the risk of nephrotoxicity in patients without a history of renal disease.2-4 The case presented is that of a patient treated with adefovir at a dose of 10 mg/day which caused abnormalities in the proximal renal tubule, leading to hypophosphatemic osteomalacia.

Case Presentation

The patient was an 81 year old male with a single kidney, with chronic hepatitis B treated with adefovir for four years approximately at a dose of 10 mg/day. The patient had poor overall condition, fatigue, weakness, bone pain, muscle atrophy and weight loss which had lasted for a year. He had elevated alkaline phosphatase (386 U/l; normal <140 U/l) and a bone scan showed multiple pathological uptake areas (Fig. 1). With the presumptive diagnosis of Paget’s disease, treatment was begun with bisphosphonates (etidronate 30 mg/day for 2 months), calcium and vitamin D, with no clinical improvement, so the patient was referred to the Rheumatology department. Laboratory results showed elevated alkaline phosphatase (329 U/l), hypoproteinemia (5.5 g/dl), hypoalbuminemia (3.3 g/dl), hypouricemia (1.5 mg/dl) with a fractional excretion of urate of 50% and hypophosphatemia (1.2 mg/dl) with tubular reabsorption of phosphate 9% (normal >80%). PTH levels were normal as was 25-hydroxycholecalciferol. Regarding renal function, creatinine was 1.13 mg/dl and the estimated glomerular filtration rate was 53 ml/min. The patient had proteinuria (1178 mg/day) and glucosuria (>100 mg/day). A chest X-ray showed rib fractures on both sides and bone scintigraphy showed multiple foci of uptake in the ribs, right sacrum, knees and right tibia.

A historical review of the analysis showed that the onset of disturbances, in particular decreasing phosphate levels, coincided with the beginning of the administration of adefovir (4 years

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* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: nathali_r17@hotmail.com (M.N. Rivas Zavaleta).

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phosphate reabsorption, decreasing its concentration in plasma and ultimately leading to osteomalacia.

In conclusion, although low doses of adefovir are not usually associated with renal toxicity and hypophosphatemia due to renal phosphate loss, the comorbid conditions present in this case led to a situation of increased susceptibility.

**Ethical Responsibilities**

**Protection of people and animals.** The authors state that no experiments were performed on humans or animals.

**Data confidentiality.** The authors declare that they have followed the protocols of their workplace regarding the publication of data from patients and all patients included in the study have received sufficient information and gave their written informed consent to participate in this study.

**Right to privacy and informed consent.** The authors state that no patient data appears in this article.

**Conflict of Interest**

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

**References**