

FOURNIER'S GANGRENE AS MANIFESTATION OF ANOGENITAL NECROTIZING FASCIITIS

L. Török and E. Ficsor

SUMMARY

The authors present the main clinical features, pathogenesis and therapy in a typical case of Fournier's gangrene in a genital localization. This foudroyant infection with high mortality is regarded as a characteristic form of a toxic shock-like syndrome manifested as a necrotizing fasciitis. It is emphasized that despite adequate therapy certain basic diseases or predisposing factors can still result in a lethal outcome.

Keywords

Fournier's gangrene, necrotizing fasciitis, toxic shock-like syndrome

INTRODUCTION

At present, Fournier's gangrene is generally defined as a hyper-acute necrotizing infection with high mortality, which involves subcutis and fasciae of the anogenital area. The first case of infection which affected male genitals was described in 1883 by the French dermatologist Fournier. Later, perineal, ano-rectal and vulval forms were also reported. In the past, different terms have been used to describe the disease: synergic gangrene non-clostridial myonecrosis of the perineal and scrotal skin; perineal phlegmone.

A typical case history of Fournier's gangrene with lethal out-come, which developed as a sequel to multiple underlying diseases is presented along with its clinical features, pathogenesis and therapy.

CASE HISTORY

A male patient aged 55 had a history of malignant hypertension, cardiac decompensation, chronic glomerulonephritis, and spleno-megaly (myeloid metaplasia). In 1995 the patient was admitted to a department of medicine for progression of hepato-splenomegaly, aggravation of myocardial lesions due to hypertension, generalized edema due to deterioration of renal function, and erysipelas affecting the lower right limb. Following antibiotic therapy (penicillin) the erysipelas healed, but some days later a painful, edematous erythema with circumscribed skin necrosis and subsequent suppuration of the scrotum developed. At that time the patient was admitted to our Department.

Genital status at admission: light-red discoloration of

