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Selected E.N.T. Emergencies Related to Sepsis

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Selected E.N.T. Emergencies Lecture Outline

- Complications of acute sinusitis
  - Frontal and orbital abscesses
- Acute mastoiditis
- Acute chondritis
- Mucormycosis
- Peritonsillar abscess
- Retropharyngeal and parapharyngeal abscesses
- Ludwig’s angina
- Vincent’s Angina
- Acute epiglottitis
Acute Sinusitis Complications

- Frontal or orbital abscess
- Need facial CT scan for Dx
- Need IV antibiotics, hospital admission, and surgical drainage
Signs of Potentially Dangerous Complications of Acute Sinusitis

- Periorbital, frontal, or cheek edema
- Proptosis
  - Manifestation of orbital abscess
- Ophthalmoplegia
- Ptosis
- Diplopia
- Meningeal signs
- Neuro deficits of cranial nerves II to VI
CT scan showing fluid with pockets of air in frontal air cells from frontal sinusitis in a six year old male
CT scan showing orbital & brain abscesses from ethmoid sinusitis
CT scan showing epidural abscess from frontal sinusitis (six year old male with headache, emesis, and fever)
Subdural abscess from frontal sinusitis
Surgical drainage for same patient in prior slide
Patient with bony destruction from frontal sinus abscess
Coronal CT scan showing left ethmoid opacification and displacement of globe by intraorbital mass (patient was a 2 year old male presenting with fever, proptosis, and left orbital cellulitis)
Patient with left orbital abscess
CT scan of same patient with left orbital abscess
Another patient with right retro-orbital abscess
Preseptal cellulitis (important to differentiate from orbital abscess; Use facial CT to do this)

These patients should be admitted and receive IV and topical antibiotics.
Antibiotics to Consider for Rx of Sinusitis Complications

- Ceftriaxone 1 gm IV q 12h
- Cefotaxime 2 gm IV q 4h
- Ceftizoxime 4 gm IV q 8h + metronidazole 30 mg/Kg/d
- Ampicillin / sulbactam 3 gm IV q 6h
- Vancomycin 500 mg q 6h + aztreonam 1 gm q 8h or chloramphenicol (for PCN-allergic patients)
Acute Mastoiditis

- Uncommon now due to antibiotic use for otitis media
- Most common causative bug is Strep pneumoniae
- Rx is IV antibiotics, myringotomy, & drainage
- Mastoidectomy for resistant or complicated cases
- Related serious problem is Necrotizing External Otitis (or “Malignant External Otitis”)
  - Usually caused by Pseudomonas
  - Requires IV antibiotics for 4 weeks and radical surgical debridement
Child with acute mastoiditis from concurrent otitis media
Acute Chondritis

- Can be complication of ear piercing
- Most commonly caused by Pseudomonas but can be due to Strep or Staph
- Requires IV antibiotics
- Also needs incision, drainage, and pressure dressing if abscess present
Patients with acute chondritis
Mucormycosis

- An aggressive opportunistic fungal infection usually with Mucor or Rhizopus
- Occurs in immunocompromised and poorly controlled diabetic patients
- Mortality 30 to 70%
- Requires IV and topical amphotericin B and aggressive surgical debridement
Fig 2. Mucormycosis in a young man with acute leukemia. There are black necrotic lesions on the left side of the nose and in the right nostril. Biopsy demonstrated characteristic hyphae and involvement of the maxillary sinuses. (Courtesy of Henry W. Murray, MD, Cornell University Medical College.)
Mucormycosis of the right ethmoid sinus and middle turbinate
32 year old diabetic presented with coma and DKA; the hard palate was necrotic with mucormycosis.
Peritonsillar Abscess

- Complication of acute tonsillitis
- Unilateral peritonsillar and soft palate swelling with uvular deviation
- Most commonly caused by Strep species but can be polymicrobial
- Usually have trismus, drooling, muffled “hot potato” voice
- May need CT to r/o parapharyngeal abscess
- Requires antibiotics, needle aspiration, and later interval tonsillectomy
Appearance of peritonsillar abscess
Axial CT scan of peritonsillar abscess in a child
Retropharyngeal and Parapharyngeal Abscesses

- Sx are neck swelling, fever, dysphagia, muffled voice, neck hyperextension
- Due to suppuration of retro- or parapharyngeal lymph nodes, or direct trauma
- Requires CT scan to delineate extent of abscess, IV antibiotics, surgical drainage, and sometimes airway protection with intubation
Plain film of retropharyngeal abscess
Another plain film of retropharyngeal abscess
Parapharyngeal abscess on CT
Parapharyngeal abscess (note endotracheal tube in place)
Ludwig’s Angina

- The most common neck space infection
- Is a rapidly swelling cellulitis (+/- abscess) of the sublingual and submaxillary spaces, usually arising from molar and premolar tooth root infections; usually polymicrobial infection including anerobes
- Most patients are toxic, severely ill, dehydrated
- Risk of airway obstruction due to upward tongue swelling
- Need CT to delineate any abscess present
- Rx: tracheostomy, IV antibiotics, incision and drainage of the neck, excision of source teeth
Patient with Ludwig’s angina (note typical brawny swelling of the submandibular area)
Vincent’s Angina

- An acute necrotizing infection of the pharynx and/or tonsils caused by a combination of fusiform bacilli and spirochetes (the same organisms that cause acute gingivostomatitis or “trench mouth”)
- May have fever, lymphadenopathy, and metallic taste
- Need CT to look for gas and if any associated abscess in the soft tissues
- Rx: IV penicillin and/or clindamycin, surgical debridement of necrotic tissue
Acute necrotizing ulcerative gingivitis
Acute Epiglottitis

- Due to HiB vaccine, is now rare (I’ve never seen a case in my entire career)
- Most cases now are in men age 40 to 60
- Usually caused by Hemophilus sp. and Strep pneumoniae
- Adult mortality reportedly 7%
- Most patients febrile, toxic, drooling, muffled voice
- Need CT to r/o parapharyngeal abscess
- Rx: IV ceftriaxone, +/- airway control
Plain film showing enlarged epiglottis from epiglottitis in an adult
Acute epiglottitis in a 66 year old male
CT scan of same patient as on prior slide; note column of air around the epiglottis (E); the right side of the epiglottis is more swollen than the left; hypoattenuation at “A” is suggestive of early abscess.
E.N.T. Emergencies Related to Sepsis: Lecture Summary

- Maintain low threshold for workup with facial CT, particularly in immunocompromised patients
- Start IV antibiotics early
- Don’t forget routine resuscitative measures (such as IV fluid bolus) and blood cultures in febrile or toxic patients
- Early consultation with your friendly otolaryngologist
  - May require additional consults to neurosurgery or ophthalmology
  - Use consultant to decide if pre-operative needle aspirates for culture