Cefixime-induced hepatotoxicity

Sefiksime bağlı hepatotoksisite

To the Editor,

Cefixime is a third-generation cephalosporin that is used for the treatment of infections caused by various pathogens, especially gram-negative bacteria (1). It is a generally well-tolerated and safe antibiotic. Its common adverse effects are gastrointestinal disturbances (such as diarrhea and stool changes), headache, dizziness, fatigue, muscle aches, and strange taste in the mouth (2). Hepatotoxicity associated with cefixime has not been noted previously in the medical literature. In this report, we present a case of cefixime-induced hepatotoxicity.

A 50-year-old female was admitted with loss of appetite and abdominal pain. She had been treated for an upper respiratory infection with oral cefixime for 7 days by her physician. Her complaints emerged 5 days following the treatment. In her medical history, she denied alcohol, herbal products and/or other drug use. She had no recent travel history. Physical examination was normal except for tenderness in the right upper quadrant. Laboratory tests results were as follows: alanine aminotransferase (ALT): 156 U/L (normal <40 U/L), aspartate aminotransferase (AST): 56 U/L (normal <40 U/L), and gamma glutamyl transpeptidase (GGT): 281 U/L (normal <55 U/L). Alkaline phosphatase (ALP), bilirubin, albumin, and prothrombin time were within the normal range. Autoimmune hepatitis markers, thyroid tests, ferritin, and ceruloplasmin were also normal. Viral markers for A, B, and C were negative. Ultrasound revealed no evidence of hepatobiliary-pancreatic pathology. These findings were attributed to hepatocellular type liver damage associated with cefixime use. After a two-week withdrawal of the drug, serum transaminase levels returned to normal range. The patient did not undergo percutaneous liver biopsy as the serum enzyme levels returned to normal range, and she did not consent to the biopsy procedure.

The diagnosis was established as cefixime-induced hepatotoxicity based on the absence of drug use history and other causes of hepatitis. To our knowledge, this case is the first presentation of hepatotoxicity associated with cefixime.

In conclusion, even though cefixime is generally known to be a well-tolerated and safe antibiotic, physicians should be aware of the risk of hepatotoxicity associated with cefixime use.

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