تظاهرات نورولوژیک 1-HTLV

دکتر محمداسماعیل گوهرجو متخصص مغز و اعصاب

تاريخچه

- ویروس tlv-1را اولین بار در سال ۱۹۸۰توسط اقای گالو وهمکارانش بعنوان رترو ویروس T در یک رده tlv-1 لنفوسیتویید درنوعی لنفوم جلدی شناسایی کردند.
- در ایران ویروس 1−btlvانخستین بار در جمعیت یهودی که از مشهد مهاجرت کرده و در اسراییل سکونت داشتند شناسایی شد.
- در سال ۱۹۸۵ اولین بار پروفسور دوته و دکتر جسن از انیستوپاستور پاریس ارتباط htlv-lودرگیری نخاعی در یک بیمار مبتلا به پاراپارزی اسپاستیک از مارتنیک اثبات نمود
- ♦ چند ماه بعد اسامه از ژاپن در مقاله ای تحت عنوان میلوپاتی همراه با 1-htlv-1
 ♦ HAMدر مجله لنتست چاپ شد.
- در سال ۱۹۸۸ گروهی از سازمان بهداشت جهانی در نشستی که در کاگوشیمای ژاپن داشتند. بیماری TSP و HAM را تحت عنوان پدیده واحد بنام TSP نامگذادی کردند.

EPIDEMIOLOGY of HTLV-1 in IRAN

- In 1992 (1370) WHO presented IRAN (Khorasan) as an endemic region of HTLV-1
- HTLV-1 is more common in the north of Khorasan province especially Neyshabour, Mashad and Ghoochan
 - Why Khorasan?

PATHOGENESIS

- Direct attack of virus to the neurons is not proved
- Indirect contamination of nervous system by lymphocytes
- Autoimmune mechanisms (humeral and cellular) is suspected
- Main pathology is demyelination

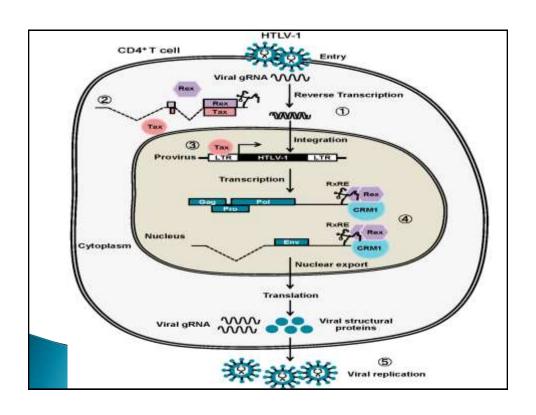
Virology

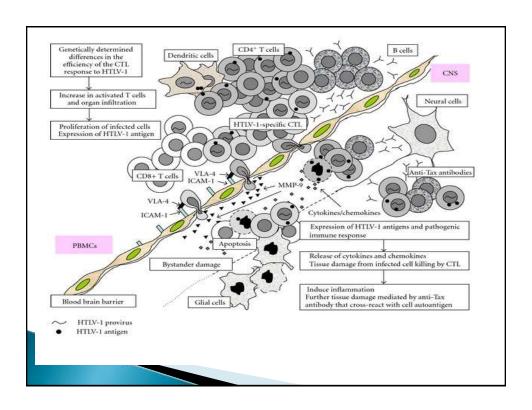


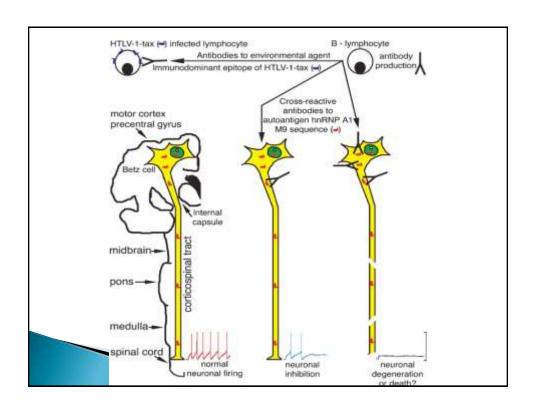
HTLV-1 is an enveloped, double-stranded RNA type C retrovirus. During the life cycle of the virus the RNA is converted to doublestranded DNA and integrated into the DNA of the host cell. This integrated DNA is referred to as the 'provirus'.

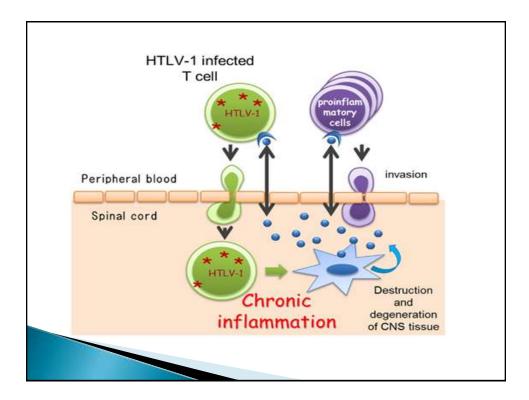
HTLV-1 exists largely as a cell-associated provirus and is transmitted from cell to cell via a viral synapse. This process may explain the lack of infection associated with plasma.

Provirus loads vary between individuals by more than 10 000 fold but within an infected individual the provirus load varies little over time.









The Global Spread of HTLV-1 Infection I

HTLV-1 is an ancient virus which has infected humans for thousands of years. The simian counter-part (STLV-1) is genetically almost identical.

HTLV-1 Origins

- HTLV-1 is thought to have originated in Africa and spread with human migration (including migration across the Berring land bidge)
- Thus, the virus is endemic in "older" indigenous populations including many Amerindian peoples of both North and South America, the populations of Northern and South-western Japan (rather than Korea and central Japan) and Melanesian (migration more than 5,000 years).
- Post-Colombian migrations took HTLV-1 to the Caribbean and the Americas (for a second time) and latterly to Europe
- The origin of HTLV-1 in Romania is unknown.

Prevalence

- The prevalence of the infection seems to decline in subsequent generations migrating from endemic to non-endemic areas (cultural changes related particularly to breastfeeding may be important here).
- Although both HTLV-1 and HIV-1 have similar transmission routes, in some areas their prevalence trends are divergent – HTLV-1 declining and HIV-1 increasing.

Who is at Risk of Acquiring HTLV-1 Infection?



An estimated 15-25 million individuals worldwide are infected with HTLV-1 [3]. The infection is endemic in regions of Japan, sub-Saharan Africa, the Americas, Melanesia (north of Australia, including Fiji and New Guinea) and the Middle East.

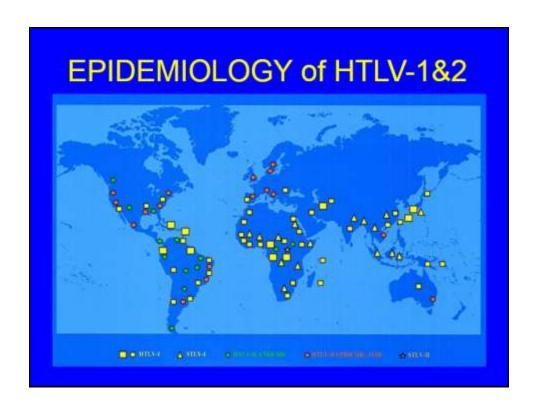
HTLV-1 infection remains uncommon in the general population in Europe with the exception of Romania. Nonetheless, it is considerably more common among immigrants from endemic areas, their sexual partners and offspring. Increased risk has been reported amongst sex workers and (for HTLV-2) injecting drug users.

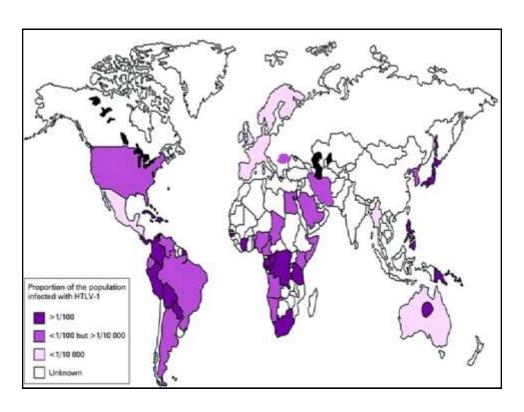
Epidemiological studies in indigenous Europeans (except Romania) usually implicate transmission through sexual intercourse with partners from endemic regions or blood transfusion. The seroprevalence among low-risk populations in Europe is less than 0.1%.

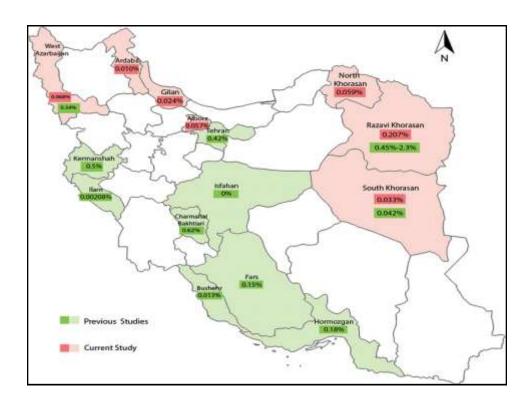
An estimated 20,000 people in the UK are infected with HTLV-1 [4].

HTLV-1 HISTORY

- HTLV1 recognized for first time in a 28 Y/O black man with ATL in 1980
- Gessain and De The described a form of myelopathy caused by HTLV1 in a patient from Martinique in 1985
- Tropical Spastic Paraparesis (TSP)
- HTLV1 Associated Myelopathy (HAM)
- HAM/TSP
- HTLV1 is a RNA virus of Retroviridea family







EPIDEMIOLOGY of HTLV-1

Prevalence of seropositivity is different:

south of Japan 10-30%

Africa 1-9%

Caribbean islands ... 1-7%

Neyshabour 3%

Mashhad 1.3-2.6%

- Only 1-5% of healthy carriers lead to HAM
- Incubation period: 6 months to 3 years
- Mean age of onset: 30 y/o (4th decade)
- F to M ratio :3/1 to 2/1

TRANSMISSION

- Sexual contacts :M to F is more common than F to M (60/1)
- Blood transfusion especially cell containing products
- Perinatal
- Breast feeding
- I.V Drug abuse

W. permission and a

Transmission of HTLV-1 I



The three major modes of transmission of HTLV-1 are:

- Perinatal
 - Especially via prolonged breastfeeding the risk of vertical transmission (15-25%) is largely attributable to breastfeeding with less than 5% occurring in utero or during birth [1].
- 2. Sexual
 - · Higher risk from male to female
- 3. Exposure to infected lymphoid cells
 - For example by blood transfusion, needle-stick injuries or needle sharing by injected drug users.
 - Transfusion of infected blood products leads to seroconversion in 40-85% of recipients (with immune suppression at the time of transfusion an important risk factor).
 - Organ transplantation (kidney and liver) has also resulted in transmission.

Transmission of HTLV-1 III



The latent period can be many decades (e.g. peak onset of ATLL (Adult T cell Leukaemia/lymphoma) in Japan is in the 6th and 7th decades) but much shorter periods (months) have been described after acquisition through blood transfusion.

Universal screening of blood donors for HTLV-1 was introduced in the UK in 2002. The screening test also detects HTLV-2.

HTLV-2

This retrovirus is endemic amongst injecting drug users in North America and Europe. Its role in the development of disease however is uncertain.

The prevalence of HTLV-2 in the UK is significantly less than HTLV-1. Most HTLV-2 infected blood donors have no history of IDU (Intravenous Drug Use) and have probably acquired infection through sexual intercourse.

HTLV-2 is transmitted from mother to child, predominantly through breastfeeding.

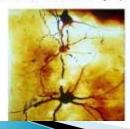
Risk Factors for Developing HTLV-1 associated Disease



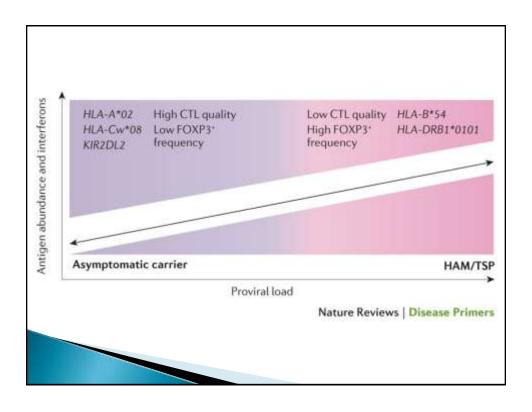
HTLV-1 causes a lifelong infection but, in contrast to HIV-1, most of those infected remain asymptomatic throughout life.

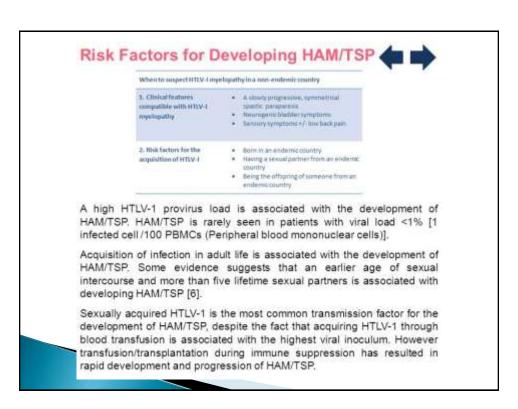
The lifetime risk of a HTLV-1 carrier developing the most common neurological complication — a spastic paraparesis (known as HTLV-1-associated myelopathy/tropical spastic paraparesis (HAM/TSP))- is 0.25% in Japan and approximately 3% elsewhere [5].

HTLV-1 infection is also associated with a lifetime risk of 2-6% of adult T-cell leukaemia/lymphoma [5].



Spinal motorneurons, Image courtesy of Welcome Images.





Risk Factors for Developing HAM/TSP



Gender and Progression

More women than men develop HAM/TSP (a difference not entirely attributable to the higher prevalence amongst women in endemic areas) and the disease progresses faster in women. In the UK nearly 80% of patients with HAM/TSP at the National Centre for Human Retrovirology are women.

The peak incidence of HAM/TSP is in the 4th and 5th decades.

A few patients progress more rapidly, particularly those aged more than 50 years at onset (or children), with a high provirus load and high antibody titres. A subacute presentation, leading to severe paraplegia in less than 2 years has been described in post-transfusional and post-transplant cases [7].



Image copyright Ferdinand Reus.

HTLV-1 NEUROLOGICAL COMPLICATIONS

- Myelopathy
- Polyneuropathy
- ALS like syndrome
- · Cerebellar ataxia
- Cranial neuropathy
- Dementia
- Myositis
- MS like presentation (rare)

Neurological Complications of HTLV-1 Infection

Spastic paraparesis has been reported in the tropics for many years. The association with HTLV-1 was first recognised in 1985. Other complications can be divided into:

Other neurological complications

Other neurological complications reported (some in isolated case reports only) in association with HTLV-1 infection include...

- Myositis - Cognitive impairment
- Small-fibre sensory polyneuropathy
 - Autonomic dysfunction
- Encephalitis/encephalopathy Motor neuron disease/ amyotrophic lateral sclerosis

Other non-neurological conditions

Other non-neurological conditions reported in association with HTLV-1 infection include...

- Uveitis
- arthropathy - thyroiditis
- Sjorgren's syndrome Pneumonitis
- crusted scables
- Infective dermatitis
- leprosy
- Strongyloides stercoralis hyperinfection

The best quality evidence exists to link adult T-cell leukaemia/lymphoma (ATLL), HAM/TSP and uveitis with HTLV-1 infection.

SIGN & SYMPTOMS of HAM/TSP

- Motor weakness (spastic paraparesis)
- Sensory disturbances (paresthesia)
- Sensory ataxia
- Bladder dysfunction (spastic bladder)
- Bowl dysfunction
- Impotence
- Pain

Motor Disturbance

Symptoms: gait disturbance, tendency to fall, stumbling, and leg weakness

Signs: spastic paraparesis, weakness and hyperreflexia of the lower limbs, clonus, and Babinski's sign

Sensory Disturbance

Symptoms: pain and numbness at the lumbar level and lower limbs and back pain

Signs: paresthesia of the feet and occasionally of the hands, sensory level at the lower thoracic spinal cord, loss of light touch sensation

Autonomic Dysfunction

Symptoms: urinary frequency, urgency, incontinence, retention, constipation, and sexual dysfunction

Signs: neurogenic bladder, overactive bladder, diminished peristalsis, and erectile dysfunction

Clinical Features of HAM/TSP I



Symptoms

The symptoms usually begin in adulthood, most frequently after the age of 30, HAM/TSP usually presents as a slowly progressive spastic paraparesis. A minority (11% in UK cohort) appear to have a non-progressive illness [4].

Weakness of the legs

In 60%, this is the first symptom and may be unilateral initially.

Symptom onset and age

 The median age from symptom onset to unilateral walking aid is 6 years, bilateral walking aid 13 years and wheelchair dependence 21 years [8]. In a UK cohort a 10m timed walk deteriorated by a mean of 2s/10m/yr amongst those not using a walking aid [4].

Bladder

 Bladder symptoms are very common and may precede the paraparesis by some years.

Pain

 Present in about 50%, usually in the lumbar region and often radiating to the legs. It is commonly severe and more distressing than the gait symptoms

Sensory disturbance

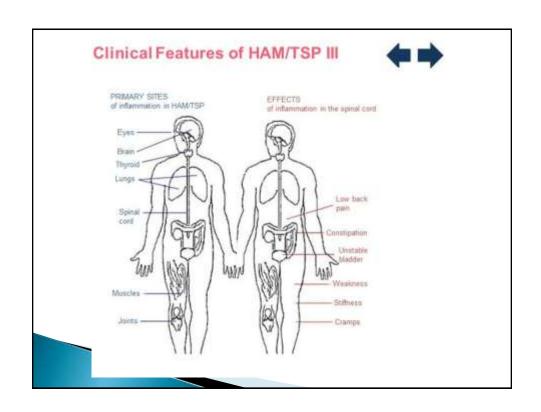
Sensory disturbance other than pain is generally mild although there
may be paraesthesia of the feet and occasionally the hands.

Clinical Features of HAM/TSP II



Signs include:

- · The cranial nerves are typically unaffected
- Patients have a spastic paraparesis with weakness of the lower limbs most evidently proximally
- · There is often diffuse hyper-reflexia and extensor plantar responses
- Ankle jerks however may be absent (possibly representing additional peripheral nervous system involvement)
- · Upper limb strength is usually preserved
- A sensory level is unusual. There is often a discrepancy between striking motor signs and a mild sensory component



DIAGNOSIS

 SEROLOGICAL TESTS (blood & CSF): ELISA

Western Blot

- · Polymeras Chain Reaction (PCR)
- MRI (usually normal)
- EMG/NCV

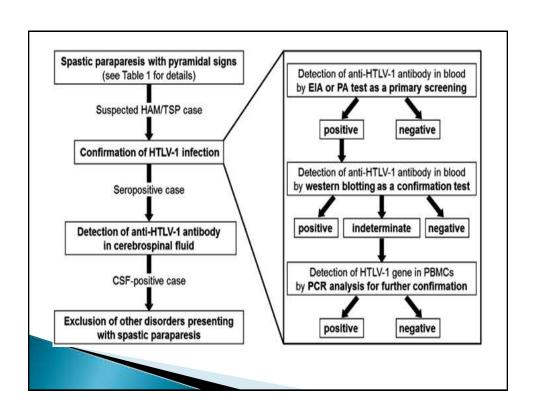


Table 2. World Health Organization diagnostic criteria for HAM/TSP.

Age and sex incidence Mostly sporadic and adult, but sometimes familial: occasionally seen in dilichood: females predominant Usually insidious but may be sudden Main neurological Chronic spestic paraparesis, which usually progresses slowly, sometimes remaining static after initial progression Weakness of the lower limbs, more marked proximally manifestations Bladder disturbance usually an early feature; constipation usually occurs later; impotency or decreased libido is common Sensory symptoms such as tingling, pins and needles, and burning are more prominent than objective physical signs Low lumber pain with radiation to the legs is common Vibration sense is frequently impaired; proprioception is less often affected. Hyperreflexia of the lower limbs, often with clonus and Babinski's sign Hyperreflexia of the upper limbs, positive Hoffman's and Tromner signs frequent; weakness may be absent Exaggerated jaw jerk in some patients Less frequent reurological Cerebellar signs, optic atrophy, deefness, hystagmus, other cranial nerve deficits, hand tremor, absent, or decreased findings ankle ierk. Convulsions, cognitive impairment, dementia, or impaired consciousness are rare Muscular strophy, fesciculations (rare), polymyositis, peripheral neuropathy, polynaticulopathy, cranial neuropathy. meningitis, encephalopathy Systemic non-neurological Pulmonary alveolitis, sweltis, Syogran's syndrome, arthropathy, vesculitis, ichthyosis, cryoglobulinamia, monocional commopathy, adult T cell leukemis/lymphoms manifestationa Laboratory diagnosis Presence of HTLV-1 antibodies or antigens in blood and CSF CFS may show mild lymphocyte pleiocytosis Lobulated lymphocytes may be present in blood and/or CSF Mild to moderate increase of protein may present in CSF

Diagnostic Tests used to Detect HTLV-1

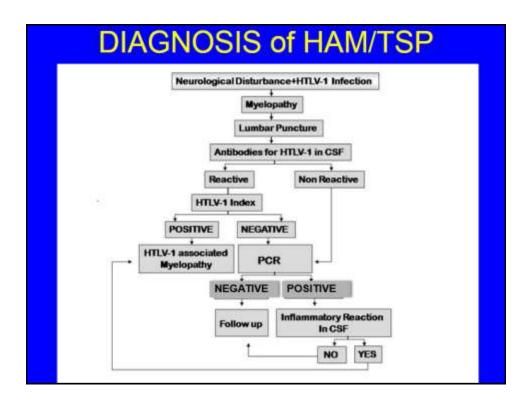
Blood



- Serological screening for HTLV-1 is by an enzyme immunoassay (EIA) or particle agglutination test
- Confirmatory testing of EIA positive results is essential to eliminate false positives and distinguish between HTLV-1 and HTLV-2 (HTLV-2 may have a role in the development of disease but this is less certain)
- A western blot is the preferred serological confirmatory test as this also types the infection. HTLV-1 DNA PCR on a blood sample is required if the western blot is indeterminate
- Proviral load which is a useful prognostic marker is determined by quantitative PCR

CSF

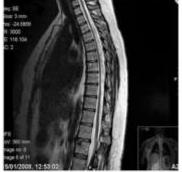
- There may be a mild CSF pleocytosis (usually less than 50 cells/mm³) and a mild to moderately increased CSF protein
- Antibodies against HTLV-1 are found in the CSF in higher levels in patients with HAM/TSP than in asymptomatic carriers
- The HTLV-1 provirus can be demonstrated in the CSF of HAM/TSP patients by PCR
- Measuring the provirus in blood and CSF simultaneously helps to confirm a diagnosis of HAM/TSP as the ratio of proviral load in CSF to that in peripheral blood is above 1.0 in those with HAM/TSP



The Role of Neuroimaging in the Diagnosis of HAM/TSP Non-specific periventricular and subcortical white matter lesions have been observed in 50-80% of patients with HAM/TSP on brain

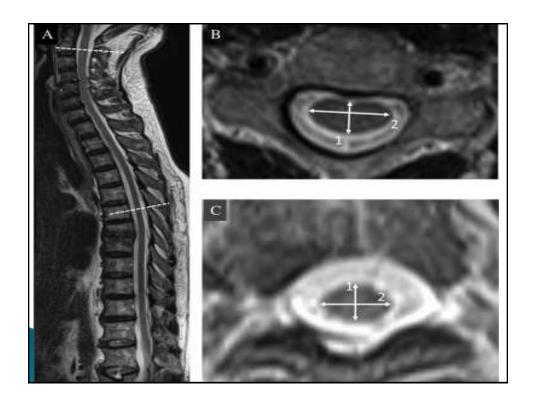
subcortical white matter lesions have been observed in 50-80% of patients with HAM/TSP on brain MRI [9,10]. However, these lesions do not distinguish HAM/TSP patients from asymptomatic HTLV-1 carriers and there have not been sufficient comparisons with HTLV-1 negative controls.

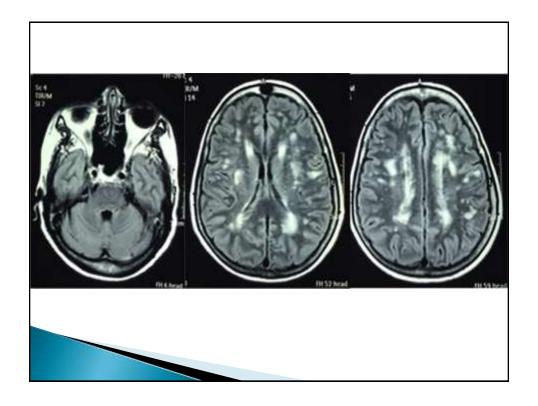
Spinal cord atrophy has been observed with MRI in a minority of patients (14% in one small series) to



An MRI scan of the thoracic spine shows some spinal cord atrophy.

Spinal cord swelling or high-signal intensity in the posterior columns has also been observed, possibly reflecting early, active spinal cord inflammation





TREATMENT

Symptomatic Tx:

Antispastic agents

Anticholinergic agents

Physiotherapy

· Etiological Tx:

Corticosteroids

Cytotoxics

Alpha Interferon

Other Immunomodulators

Current Management Approaches in HTLV-1 Associated Neurological Disease II

Symptomatic management of HAM/TS

- Antispasmodics, laxatives and management of bladder and erectile dysfunction are all important facets of the symptomatic management of HAM/TSP.
- Physiotherapy is useful to maximise function.
- Urinary tract infections are common and often result in transient neurological deterioration, therefore recognition and prompt treatment is vital.



Current Management Approaches in HTLV-1 Associated Neurological Disease I

In practice, steroids are often used despite the poor evidence base. This probably reflects the premise that there is a significant inflammatory phase early in the illness.

1g of IV methylprednisolone is often used (usually for three days) to improve symptoms generally, especially pain. The effect of steroids is generally transient, lasting weeks to months and subsequent treatments are very often less effective.

Ciclosporin

- In early (<2 years from onset) disease, ciclosporin is now used in the UK based on the results from as yet unpublished work from the National Centre for Human Retrovirology
- If this is not tolerated then methotrexate us an alternative (based on anecdotal evidence only)
- Early and more aggressive management is now often favoured, although more studies are needed.

Pain management

 Pain management required careful attention as pain is commonly of multiple aetiologies.

Randomised Controlled Trials in HAM/TSP

Interferon alpha has been shown to be of some short term benefit, of varying degrees in a dose ranging study [11].

Zidovudine plus Lamivudine showed no clinical benefit compared to placebo [12].

The results from studies at the National Centre for Human Retrovirology at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington of Infliximab and Cyclosporin as potential therapeutic agents in HAM/TSP are in preparation. The Centre is keen and is commissioned to see all UK patients (except from Wales) with HTLV-1.

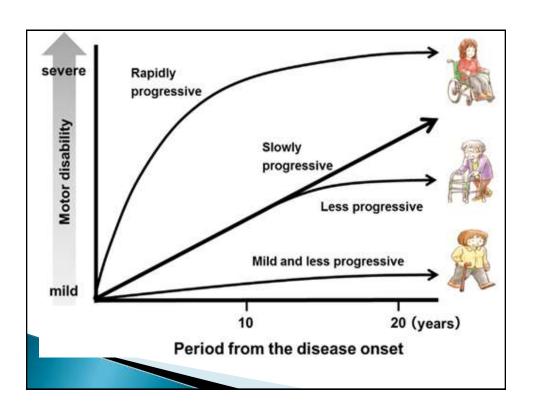
Other studies

- Multiple small observational studies of a variety of agents have been published with limited evidence of benefit
- Plasmapheresis has shown some improvements in gait and sensory disturbance in small, uncontrolled studies only.



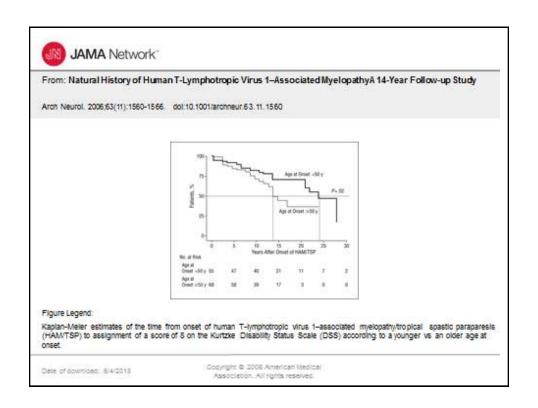
Interferon alpha, Image courtesy of Nelvit Dilmen.

Authors	Country	Study design	Reagents	Treatment regimen	Study period	No. of patients	Rate of Efficacy	Note
Drame et al. (1990b)	Japan	Open-label	Prednacione	60-60 mg and for 2 month → 10 mg aftimanth for 6 month →5 mg and for 3 month	11 Moreh	65	90.8% (59/65) 56.9% (>1)	Incidence of side effects: 20% (13)(6)
Croda et al. (2008)	Brazil	Case series	Methylpredhisolore	$1g\times 3days/month for 3-4month$	2.2Years	39	24.5%	Transient effect
Kelagawa et al. (1969)	Japan	Open-label	Prednisolone	1-2 mg/kg qd or god for 1-2 manth -> tapening	6-12 Month	131	81.7% 69.5% (>1)	Decrease of CSF neopterin
			Methylprednisolone Interferon-a	500 mg-1g x 3 days 3 MU/day x 30 days	1-3 Month	10 32	30.0% 62.5% 21.9% (>1)	For rapid progression Transient effect Incidence of side effects: 65,6% (21,
Metinetal (2012)	UK	Open-label	Cyclospanine A	2.5-5 mg/kg/day/bd for 48 week	72Week	7	71.4% (5/7) after 3 Month	Clinical feiture: two patients
bump et al. (1996)	Japan	Multicenter double-blind RCT	interferon-a	0.3 MUlday x 28 days 1 MUlday x 28 days 3 MUlday x 28 days	8Week	15 17 16	71% 23.5% 66.7%	Incidence of side effects: 26.7% (4/1 29.4% (5/17) 50.0% (8/16)
farrasak) et al. (1997).	Japan	Case series	Interferon-a	6MUlday x 14days → 6MU/3 times/week x 22 week	6Month	7	71.4% (5/7)	Clinical failure: two patients
Airma et al. (2007)	Japan	Phase IV	Interferon-a	3 MJ/blay x 4-793 days (medien 30 days)	6Month	167	66.2% 29.2% (>1)	Side effects: 874% Serious side effects: 70%
Taylor et al. (2006)	UK and Japan	Double-blind RCT	Zdovudine+lamwudine	AZT 300 mg + 3TC 150 mg bd	48Week	16	No clinical improvement	No change in proving load
Macchi et al. (2011)	UK	Case series	Tenofovir	245 mg/day	2-16 Month	6	No dinical improvement	No change in provinal load



Prognosis

To clarify clinical and laboratory findings that may be related to the pathomechanism of HTLV-I-associated myelopathy/tropical spastic paraparesis (HAM/TSP), we analyzed these findings in 239 patients with HAM/TSP, including 64 patients followed up for 10 years after their first examinations, with special interest in the HTLV-I proviral load in peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMCs). The proviral load in PBMCs did not differ in terms of modes of HTLV-I transmission. However, the proviral load in patients with age of disease onset greater than 65 years tended to be higher than those with a younger age of onset. In the 64 patients followed up for 10 years, the clinical symptoms deteriorated in 36 patients changed in 26 patients (41%), and improved in 2 HTLV-I proviral load also appeared to be related to the patients deterioration of motor disability in these patients. To our knowledge, the present study is the first longitudinal study concerning the relationship between the clinical course of HAM/TSP and HTLV-I proviral load. It is suggested that HTLV-I proviral load is related to the progression of motor disability and is an important factor to predict prognosis of patients with HAM/TSP.





From: Natural History of Human T-Lymphotropic Virus 1-Associated Myelopathy A 14-Year Follow-up Study

Arch Neurol. 2005;63(11):1560-1566, doi:10.1001/archneur.63.11.1560

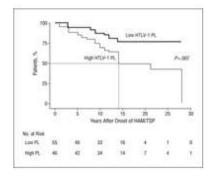


Figure Legend:

Kaplan-Meler estimates of the time from onset of human T-lymphotropic virus 1 (HTLV-1)-associated myelopathy/tropical spactic paraparesis (HAM/TSP) to assignment of a score of 8 on the Kurtzke Disability Status Scale (DSS) according to a high vs. a low HTLV-1 proviral load (PL) in peripheral blood mononuclear cells.

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پلی نوروپاتی

- « شایعترین تظاهر عصبی بعد از میلوپاتی گاهی بصورت خالص و گاهی همراه
 میلوپاتی(میلونوروپاتی) باشد.
- همانند سایر تظاهرات در خانمها شایعتر است بطور معمول در دهه سوم و چهارم دیده میشود.
- « سیر بصورت تحت حاد یا مزمن می باشد.ومواردی از سندرم گیلن باره
 گزارش شده است.
 - ▶ حسى ,حركتى, حسى حركتى, اكسونال ,دمينيليزان باشد.
- در یک مطالعه ۶۸درصد اختلالات NCVدراعصاب محیطی داشتند. 8 مونونوروپاتی (عمداتا مدین) 8 مونونوروپاتی مولتیپلکس 8 پلی نوروپاتی (8 حسی–حرکتی 8 حرکتی خالص)

پلی نوروپاتی

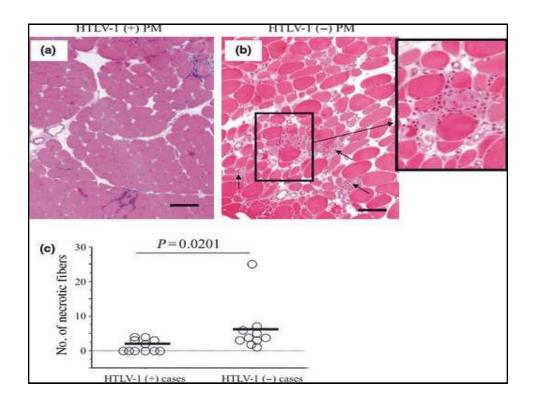
- ▶ تشخيص علايم باليني و الكتروديكنوستيك
- ▼ تشخیص افتراقی در مورد میلونورویاتی محدود کمبود B12
 بسیرنگومیلی,اتاکسی فریدرایش, ALS
 - ▶ درمورد پلی نوروپاتی خالص مشکل است
- درمان قطعی ندارد. نگدارنده شامل فیزدوتراپی, پارستزی تری سیکلیک و گاباپنتین

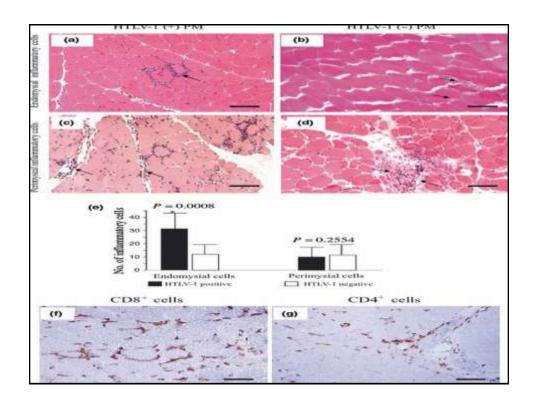
پلی میوزیت

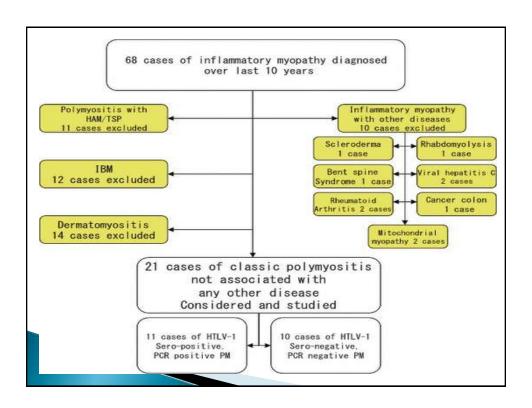
- در خانمها شایعتر است. از پلی میوزیت تیپیک سن شیوع بالاتر (۴۶سال به ۳۴)وسیر کند تر(ماه۳۲به ۱۳ دارد.
- بصورت تحت حاد یا مزمن ضعف پیشرونده کمربند لگنی و بعد کمربند شانهای
- درد ناحیه کمر, درد عضلات , اختلال بلند شدن ,کاهش وزن, تب, سردرد, تورم اندام تحتانی,افتادن مکرر شکایت شایع بیماران است.
- اگر با میلوپاتی باشد علایم حسی حرکتی و اسفنکتری ناشی از ان دیده میشود.

پلی میوزیت

- EMG NCV پترن میوژنیک
- ◆ ازمایشات: CK LDH ,الدولاز فزایش می یابد ولی به اندازه پلی میوزیت ودرماتومیوزیت تیپیک نمی باشد.حتی کراتین کیناز می تواندطبیعی باشد.
- مانند پلی میدزیت تیپیک ESRبالا انتی بادی Io−1و anti jo−1وبندرت anti jo−1میدزیت تیپیک anti -ro/ss-a anti la/ss-b
 - ♦ آزمون سرولوژیکی 1-APCR و PCR مثبت است.
- پاتولوژی وپاتوژنز: با مکانیسم ایمنی ارتشاح سلولهای تک هستهای در عضلات دیده می شود.
- درمان: برخلاف پلی میوزیت تیپیک به کورتیکواسترویت پاسخ مناسبی نمی دهد. شاید بعلت سیر کند تر و تشخیص دیرتر که د ر درمان موثر است واز طرفی کورتیکواستویت با عوارض بیشتری نسبت به پلی میوزیت تیپیک همراه است.سایتوتوکسیکها به تنهایی یا با کورتیکو استرویید جواب مناسبی نداشته است.







In order to find out patients with early stage of HAM/TSP, we started HTLV-1 carrier clinic in the endemic area, Kagoshima, Japan, in 1999.

Till the end of 2012, 407 persons have visited the clinic as first time-visitors of HTLV-1 carriers, and 6 cases were diagnosed as early stage of HAM/TSP. These 6 cases are 1 male and 5 females, 20-55 years old (mean=41.8) at the diagnosis, no history of blood transfusion, and 4 cases have family history of HAM/TSP.

They could run and had no subjective symptoms on motor function, but all had subjective symptoms either dysesthesia/pain or urinary disturbances.

Physical examination demonstrated hyper-reflexes of lower extremities with mild spasticity, positive Babinski signs, and decreased sweating of lower trunk and legs.

Laboratory test showed positive anti-HTLV-1 antibodies in both sera and CSF, and proviral loads in the blood were high (386-2181 copies/104 PBMC) in all cases.

Two cases were treated with steroids and their urinary disturbances were improved. After 2 years of follow up, their symptoms remained unchanged and decrease of proviral load was obtained in one case.

These experiences indicate that early diagnosis of HAM/TSP is possible by careful medical checking of HTLV-1-positive individuals.

Decrease of sweating in lower body, and hyper-reflexes of legs with typical Babinski sign are important signs for early diagnosis.

Treatment intervention at early stage of the disease might improve functional prognosis of HAM/TSP patients.

In the present 25-year-study time, we report a significant decrease of HAM/TSP incidence estimated more than 70% in early 2000 compared to 1986-2000 period in Martinique a French West Indies Island.

We found a trend to a significant older age at onset after 2000 (52.1 years versus 57.5 years, p=0.06) that may reflect an age cohort effect and that could be indicative of a rapid decrease in HTLV-1 seroprevalence.

We showed a significant decline in HTLV-1 infection among first-time blood donors between 1996-2000 and 2011-2015 study periods.

Thus, probable HTLV-1 seroprevalence decrease secondary to HTLV-1 antibodies screening in blood donors and pregnant women and to iterative information campaigns could partly account for HAM/TSP incidence decline.

This study emphasizes the importance of prevention strategies to control HAM/TSP development in HTLV-1 endemic areas.

