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Toxicology Practice During COVID-19 Pandemic: Experience of the Dammam Poison Control Centre-Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia

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Tropical fevers with organ failure is one of the leading cause of ICU admissions in India 1 . Commonest tropical fevers that leads to organ failure and ICU admission are Malaria, Dengue and Enteric fever 2. Scrub typhus and Leptospiral disease are less common and are often missed. Scrub typhus is caused by intracellular parasite *Orientia tsutsugamushi* belonging to rickettsia group, arthropod *Trombiculid* mite is a vector for this disease. It is endemic in Asia-Pacific region being less common in India. Scrub typhus is manifested with fever, headache, myalgia and flu like symptoms, approximately 5-14 days of being bitten by infected *trombiculid* mite. An eschar at the site of the bite is a classical feature of the disease as shown in the figure. It begins as a papule, which ulcerates and then form a dark scar, like a cigarette burn. It is mainly seen in the anterior part of the body 3 . Severe complications include liver failure, acute kidney injury, acute lung injury. Other patients can have severe neurological manifestations such as encephalitis and meningitis. The mortality rate is between 6% - 70% 4 . Diagnostic test for scrub typhus includes indirect immunofluorescence test, indirect immune-peroxidase assay, ELISA test, immunochromatographic test. Immunofluorescence test and ELISA test are quick, high specificity (84%-100%) with sensitivity of (70%-100%). Cell culture and antigen detection has high specificity (100%), with low sensitivity (50%) it is time consuming and expensive. Treatment consists of Doxycycline for 10 days. Azithromycin is an alternate drug.

Biography

Dr. Maha Almazroua has completed her MSc in Toxicology & Forensic Sciences at JUST University, School of Forensic Medicine. She is the director of The Regional Poison Control Center, Dammam, KSA, She is the Founder of the 1st National Toxicology System & Central Database OTARR (Online Toxicology Analysis Request & Result), MSK (Maha Smart Kit) & NAFSA (National Forensic Sciences Academy) . She is also the General Secretary and Board Member of Saudi Toxicology Society (STS) Omalqura University, member of the Scientific Board of the Arab Society for Forensic Sciences and Forensic Medicine (ASFSFM), Temporarily consultant at WHO ,and Chairwoman of the annual international KSAPT Conference (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities in Pharmacy and Toxicology).

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