

Clinical Tract

Group Case Studies

Opportunistic Infections and cancers

Case 1. Swelling of the neck

History

A 25 year old man is taking antiretrovirals (stavudine, 3TC and efavirenz) for 2 months. He had a CD 4 count of 160 cells/ mm³ and a viral load of 180 000 when he started. He now comes for his 2 month visit. He gained weight at the first month visit, but now lost a kilogram. He complains of fever and sweating,

Physical examination

The doctor finds swellings in the neck. The man also has a temperature of 39 degrees Celsius.

Questions for non-medical staff

1. What is the medical term for this swelling?
The man asks you some questions while he sits and waits for the doctor.
2. What might be the possible cause for this?
3. Can HIV or the antiretrovirals cause this?
4. What is the doctor going to do?
5. If this is TB, can he infect his family?

Questions for medical staff

1. Give a differential diagnosis for lymphadenopathy.
2. What would the workup be?
3. Give the treatment regimen for the most common condition that causes this clinical picture.
4. What are possible drug interactions with this patient's antiretrovirals and antiretrovirals in general?

Case 2: Mouth

History

A female patient comes to the clinic while she is in the preparation phase of going onto antiretrovirals. Her CD4 count is 90 cells/ mm³ and her viral load is 180 000 copies/ml. She complains her mouth is very painful inside.

Physical examination

On examination she has white patches in the mouth that is easily scraped off.

Questions for non-medical staff

1. What is the diagnosis here?
2. List other diseases that can cause pain in the mouth.
3. What questions would you ask the patient regarding her mouth and her eating?
4. What treatment would the doctor prescribe (List three possible drugs and dosage)?
5. What would you explain to the patient on how to use it?

Questions for medical staff

1. Write down three possible drugs to treat this condition with their dosages and duration.
2. What would you prescribe if this extends down the oesophagus (add dose and duration)

Case 3. Dermatology

History

A patient presents with severe pain only on side of the body. It has been present for 1 day. He says it is too painful to move around and he couldn't sleep at all the previous night. Looking in the file, you see the CD4 count is 345 cells/mm³.

Physical examination

The patient has small blisters limited to one side of the body.

Questions for non-medical staff

1. What is the diagnosis here in lay man's terms?
2. What is the virus that causes this?
3. Is this a sign of AIDS?
4. What treatment would the doctor prescribe

Questions for medical staff

1. Give the diagnosis in medical and lay man's terms.
2. Write down the treatment the patient needs – drug name, dosage and duration.
3. What would you prescribe if the patient comes to you only after 1 month and complain the area is very painful?

Case 4: Neurology

History

A man of 28 years of age presents with progressive weakness on the left hand side involving the arm and leg. His speech is mildly affected. The weakness developed over a period of three weeks. He has focal seizures without losing consciousness. He's been confused for a week.

Physical examination

On physical examination his Glasgow coma scale is 14/15. His temperature is 37.1°C. He does not have neck stiffness. He has mild weakness of the arm and leg.



Brain scan before and after contrast

Questions non-medical staff

1. His sister phones you at the clinic and gives you the history as above. She asks you what this might be. What do you tell her?
2. She also asks you what she should do. What advice will you give her?

Questions for medical staff

1. What is the diagnosis?
2. What further investigations would you do?
3. What therapy would you use? Dosage and duration.
4. What are his chances of recovery?
5. What is the differential diagnosis of a mass occupying lesion?

Case 5: Oncology

History

A patient presenting to the clinic for ART complains of swelling of the leg and that there is a skin rash. The patient has a CD4 count of 224 cells/mm³ and a viral load of 40 000 copies/mm³.

Physical examination

The skin of the one leg is darkly discoloured and indurated and the leg is swollen. The doctor diagnosis Kaposi sarcoma.

Questions non-medical staff

1. Stage this patient on the WHO scale.
2. How do you explain cancer to a patient?
3. What treatment is given for cancer?

Questions for medical staff

1. Stage this patient on the WHO scale.
2. What would you pay special attention to in the physical examination?
3. How do you confirm the diagnosis?
4. How do you explain cancer to a patient?
5. Does this patient qualify for antiretrovirals?
6. What treatment modalities do you recommend first?
7. If this fails?