

Tuberculous Meningitis (2 Years Study)

Homa Forouhesh Tehrani*¹; Lila Shamkhali²; Samira Rezaei²; Sanaz Akbarzade²; Lila Lormohammadi²

1- Department of Microbiology, School of Medicine, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran

2- Noor Pathobiology Lab, Tehran, Iran

info@noorlab.ir

Background & Objectives: Tuberculous meningitis occurs when tuberculosis bacteria (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*) invade the membranes and fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord. The infection usually begins elsewhere in the body, usually in the lung. Involvement of the central nervous system (CNS) by tuberculosis is rare and it is difficult to diagnose as findings are non-specific. It can affect either immunocompromised or immunocompetent people. The aim of this study was to determine the frequency of TB meningitis.

Methods: In 2 years investigation from March 2010 to March 2012, 197 CSF specimens were admitted to the laboratory. For detection TB, smear preparation for staining with ziehl-neelsen, culture methods and PCR was carried on all specimens.

Results: From 197 CSF specimens 4 (2.3%) cases were positive including: 3 smear negative culture positive and one both culture and smear positive all were positive by PCR methods.

Conclusion: Diagnosis of TB meningitis is even more difficult than with other forms of bacterial meningitis. This is because it does not come on suddenly with classic meningitis symptoms. In areas when TB prevalence is high, TB meningitis is most common in children aged 0-4 years, and in areas where TB prevalence is low most cases are in adults. In this study all patients were adults (31-54) years old. Thus diagnosis of TBM can not be made solely on the basis of clinical finding, the good laboratory practice is very important.

Keywords: Meningitis; *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*