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CORRESPONDENCE

Burden of Sickle Cell Disease in a Tertiary Care Hospital in Southern Rajasthan

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To the Editor: Sickle cell disease is an important health problem in southern Rajasthan, being a tribal region, leading to various complications [1, 2]. Authors report prevalence and characteristics of sickle cell disease (SCD) among the symptomatic patients visiting a tertiary care hospital at Udaipur, Rajasthan. A prospective study was conducted on patients with clinical suspicion of sickle cell disease. Of the 161 patients screened 28 (17.4%) were diagnosed with SCD, half of them (14) were sickle cell trait (HbAS), 8 (28.6%) homozygous (HbSS), 5 (17.9%) sickle β thalassemia and 1 (3.6%) was found to have HbDS. The common presenting complaints amongst the SCD patients in this study were easy fatigability (78.5%), fever (46.4%), jaundice (39.2%), pain/ swelling of limbs (28.6%), abdominal pain (25%), abdominal distension (25%), headache (14.3%), back pain (7.1%), respiratory symptoms (7.1%), limping (7.1%), recurrent infections (3.6%), hematemesis (3.6%) and orbital cellulitis (3.6%). On examination, common findings were pallor (78.5%), splenomegaly (75%), hepatomegaly (50%) and icterus (39.3%). Abdominal pain ($P=0.039$), headache ($P=0.004$) and splenomegaly ($P=0.002$) were significantly more in SCD patients as compared to the total screened patients. Twenty-two patients presented with vaso-occlusive crisis which were pain in limbs (28.6%), pain abdomen (25%), headache (14.3%), back pain (7.1%), acute chest syndrome (7.1%) and avascular necrosis (7.1%). We conclude that there is a need for more extensive studies in general population in this region to establish the burden of this disease so that the mission to eliminate sickle cell disease by 2047 can be achieved [3].

Declarations

Ethical Approval By Institutional Ethics Committee of RNT Medical College, Udaipur, Rajasthan on 2nd Feb. 2022 (Approval no.: RNT/Stat./IEC/2022/78).

Conflict of Interest None.

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