NEUROLOGICAL SIGNS AS INFLUENZA EARLY MANIFESTATIONS – OWN OBSERVATIONS IN SEASON 2015/2016

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Background: Influenza is an infectious disease, manifested mainly through respiratory signs and symptoms, but other signs, such as neurological, may also occur.

Aim: To analyze the frequency of neurological signs and the disease course in patients with flu.

Material and methods: Among 154 children (7months to 16years) hospitalized in 2015-2016 influenza season, 14.9% (23/154) showed neurological symptoms (9 girls and 14 boys).

Results: 65.2% (15/23) of the children were diagnosed with influenza A, 30.4%(7/23) with B, and 4.3%(1/23) with A+B. The flu was confirmed with Rapid Influenza Diagnosis Tests (RIDT) in 52.2%(12/23) of cases or Real Time-Polymerase Chains Reaction (RT-PCR) -47.8%(11/23). The most common neurological signs were seizures (69.6%;16/23). Other signs concerned a loss of consciousness (26.1%;6/23) and an altered mental state (4.3%;1/23). 13%(3/23) of the patients had complex seizures not related to fever. Central nervous system (CNS) imaging (CT or MRI) was performed in 21.7%(5/23) of children. 21.8% (5/23) of patients were treated with antibiotics. Hospital treatment lasted between 3 to 13 days.

Conclusions: Influenza manifestations may be atypical, and the presence of neurological signs not necessarily suggests a CNS pathology, but may arouse a suspicion of influenza.

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