Case reports


Pituitary coma with continuing menstruation

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Summary

A case of pituitary coma with continuing menstruation is presented. This association is extremely rare, but a history of recent menstrual periods does not exclude advanced hypopituitarism from the differential diagnosis of severe hyponatraemia.

Introduction

The pattern of hormone deficiency in pituitary failure is variable and the occurrence of deficiencies of single hormones is well recognized (Hall, 1974). Although menstrual cycles and even pregnancy are known to occur in patients with partial hypopituitarism (Simpson, 1959), gonadotrophin loss is usually an early if not the first feature of most patients with hypopituitarism (Sheehan, 1939). This is a report of a patient, presenting with coma due to advanced pituitary failure, who was still menstruating.

Case report

A 50-year-old housewife was admitted to hospital in July 1976 48 hr after an episode of unconsciousness lasting several hours from which she had made a spontaneous recovery. A previous attack had occurred in September 1975. Following both attacks, which were unrelated to fasting, she had noticed a dull frontal headache and sweating. After the first attack, she had been seen in out-patients and found to have a fasting blood sugar of 2-7 mmol/l (43 mg/dl) with normal plasma electrolytes. She had felt generally unwell since the death of her husband 4 years previously, and for 2 years had noticed increasing lethargy.

She had had normal pregnancies and had lactated normally over 24 and 16 years previously. She had been under regular review in gynaecological outpatients for vaginal prolapse since 1973 and there is a well documented account of her menstrual history. During the 12 months before admission she had had

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Normal alkaline phosphatase in primary biliary cirrhosis

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Summary
A patient with primary biliary cirrhosis is described. Throughout her illness the serum alkaline phosphatase remained normal and this unique feature emphasizes the importance of histology in diagnosing the disease.

Introduction
Primary biliary cirrhosis (PBC) is associated with a raised serum alkaline phosphatase level (Sherlock and Scheuer, 1973). A patient is described in whom the level of this enzyme remained normal throughout her long illness.

Case report
A Caucasian patient presented in 1963 at the age of 56 years with a transient episode of tiredness and...
Pituitary coma with continuing menstruation.

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