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Profile of Cryptococcal meningitis in a tertiary care hospital of Northern India

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Cryptococcal meningitis is an opportunistic infection usually seen in immuno-compromised patients, but is also known to affect apparently healthy individuals. Cryptococcal meningitis is a disease with significant morbidity and mortality. Worldwide, approximately 1 million new cases of cryptococcal meningitis occur each year, resulting in 625,000 deaths. This study was undertaken to assess the profile of patients with cryptococcal meningitis in a tertiary care center of north India. Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) samples from 5716 meningitis patients (from Jan 2007 - Dec 2015) were tested by India ink preparation / antigen detection by latex agglutination test (LAT) / culture. A total of 127(2.2%) patients were positive by one or more tests for *Cryptococcus neoformans*. Comorbidities associated with the disease were - HIV, diabetes mellitus, renal transplantation, etc. Fever and headache were the most common clinical features. Comparison of Cryptococcal antigen and india ink was done with culture for a period of 6 months and 55.6% of the samples positive by LAT showed growth of *Cryptococcus* on culture. Diagnostic methods such as culture and India ink are specific but less sensitive. Antigen detection by latex agglutination proved to be both sensitive and specific method for the diagnosis of cryptococcal meningitis. Early diagnosis of infection by detection of cryptococcal antigen by latex agglutination may alter the prognosis of these patients.

Biography

Deepinder has completed her MD from Punjab University. She is the head of department of Microbiology at Dayanand Medical College and Hospital and has published more than 80 papers in reputed journals. She has been the editor of the Journal of gastrointestinal infections (India) from 2011-2014 and is the General secretary of "Gastrointestinal infection society of India" from year 2015.

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