

STEROID RESISTANT MINIMAL CHANGE DISEASE ASSOCIATED WITH THYMOMA: A CASE REPORT

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association of glomerulonephritis and thymic tumor was

first described by Posner et al in 1980 . The association is

quite low; <1% in surgical series. A total of 21 cases have

been reported in the French and English literature. Minimal

change disease (MCD) is the most frequent (67%)

thymoma associated glomerular lesion. Fortunately the

majority (84%) of these patients are steroid sensitive. We

report a case of steroid resistant thymoma associated MCD.

Case Report: A 63-year-old male with past medical history

of diabetes mellitus for six years was referred for new onset

nephrotic syndrome. Kidney biopsy revealed MCD. The

proteinuria did not respond to steroids. Further diagnostic

tests revealed a mediastinal mass. Following removal this

was diagnosed as spindle cell thymoma. Post thymectomy

hypoalbuminemia persisted despite modest reduction in

proteinuria. The patient continued to have edema resistant

to diuretic therapy and eventually was started on dialysis.

Discussion: The pathogenesis of glomerular lesions in

thymoma related minimal change disease remains

controversial. The beneficial effect of immunosuppressive

therapy in most patients suggests a link between the

immune system and MCD. Animal studies suggest that

thymectomy does not modify the nephropathy. Further

studies of this association between nephrotic syndrome and

thymoma are needed to define the specific immune

dysregulation associated with this disorder.