

THYMOGLOBULIN® RELATED DELAYED CARDIOPULMONARY REACTION IN A KIDNEY TRANSPLANT RECIPIENT

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Thymoglobulin is a polyclonal antibody generated in rabbits following immunization with human T-cells and thymocytes. This case report describes an unusually delayed reaction after thymoglobulin administration.

A 47 year old Afro-American male underwent deceased kidney transplant for lupus nephritis associated ESRD. His induction therapy included thymoglobulin, steroid and MMF. Patient got his 3rd dose of thymoglobulin on post-operative day 5 without any immediate adverse effect. About 22 hours later he developed acute cardiopulmonary symptoms manifested as acute bronchospasm with hypoxia, tachypnea, elevated BP, tachycardia, and fever. He was immediately treated with IV steroid, epinephrine, antihistamine and breathing treatment and he responded quickly. He was monitored in the ICU for a day and all work up for other possible etiology was negative and he was discharged home after 48 hours.

The usual acute adverse reactions to thymoglobulin are related to cytokine release syndrome and include fever, tachycardia, respiratory distress, myalgia, headache etc and usually occur immediately after first dose. This was an unusually delayed and acute onset reaction. Since it is not uncommon to administer thymoglobulin on an outpatient basis post transplant for induction and for acute rejection treatment, it is prudent to keep in mind the possibility of delayed thymoglobulin reaction.