A CASE REPORT OF A RARE SUPRAGLOTTIC INFANTILE HAEMANGIOMA

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Laryngeal haemangiomas are relatively uncommon tumors that typically occur in the subglottic area. Very few cases of supraglottic haemangiomas have been reported worldwide.

15-day-old female infant presented with breathing difficulty and high pitched inspiratory stridor, that was initially diagnosed as laryngomalacia and admitted in the neonatal ICU. An airway evaluation in the form of flexible laryngoscopy was scheduled. The family and perinatal history did not raise any concerns and the routine laboratory tests were normal

Results: Flexible laryngoscopy revealed a red-coloured mass arising from the left aryepiglottic fold that created a 50% airway obstruction. The ultrasound examination that followed revealed a 3cm vascular like mass and confirmed the suspicion of an haemangioma. The infant was treated with propranolol and submitted to regular cardiological follow up. After 3 months of treatment the stridor and breathing difficulties had significantly subsided and a second flexible laryngoscopy had revealed a major decrease of the haemangioma size and airway obstruction. The propranolol treatment was continued for 6 more months until the endoscopic and ultrasound examinations revealed full remission of the mass and the treatment was discontinued.

Supraglottic infantile haemangiomas are extremely uncommon benign tumors that can pose a threat to an infant’s life and are likely to mislead even the most experienced physician. High index of suspicion is of the utmost importance and flexible laryngoscopy should never be neglected in any case of inspiratory stridor.

Future research and development in this field should focus on the development of treatment strategies which are timely and aimed at the individual.