

Aspergillus fumigatus Meningitis in a Preterm

We are reporting a case of disseminated aspergillosis in a very low birth weight baby (birthweight 800 g; gestation 27 wk). After 4 days of admission in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, the baby developed fever, respiratory distress and lethargy. On 7th day, a maculopapular rash with grayish discoloration of skin was noticed. Child was screened for sepsis and subjected to lumbar puncture. CSF microscopy revealed pus cells and thin hyaline septate fungal hyphae. culture on Sabouraud's Dextrose Agar (SDA) demonstrated white granular mycelial growth. which was confirmed as *Aspergillus fumigatus*. The same fungus was also isolated from blood culture.

Mother and baby were non-reactive for HIV antibodies. Fluconazole 6mg/kg/day was started intravenously, and continued for 30 days. The baby responded well and could be finally discharged at a weight of 3 Kg, on breastfeeding.

Very few cases of *Aspergillus infection* in premature babies are reported previously; most of them had cutaneous aspergillosis(1,2). We report this case for its rarity and dramatic response to therapy.

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REFERENCES

1. Fucks H, Baum HV, Meth M, Wellinghausen N, Linder W, Hummler H. CNS manifestation of aspergillosis in extremely low birth weight infant. Eur J Pediatr 2006; 165: 476-480.
2. Meessen NE, Oberndorff KM, Jacobs JA. Disseminated aspergillosis in a premature neonate. J Hosp Infect 1998; 40: 249-250.

Skin Care for the Newborn

I seek comments from the authors on some issues contained in informative and interesting article on skin care for the newborn(1).

It is stated that shampoos should have minimal time of contact with the scalp to avoid irritant dermatitis. Regarding baby bath the authors have stated that the bath of the newborn should not last more than 5 minutes, prolonged bath increases the hydration of the skin and reduces the threshold for friction. Similarly recommended minimum and maximum time period for shampoo application to scalp should be advised.

It is stated that pH of the shampoo should be close to that of tears, but the authors have not mentioned the pH range of the tears. Some doctors may not remember pH of the tears which is 7.1 - 7.4. The workshop had been sponsored by Johnson and Johnson Ltd, a manufacturer of baby care products. I examined the shampoo, baby soap and baby oil

produced by Johnson and Johnson. To my utter surprise none of these items mentioned pH on the labels of these products. How to choose the right shampoo etc, for care of skin of newborn babies ?

Regarding composition of vernix caseosa, it is stated that it is composed of water 81%, lipid 19% and proteins 10%; the total adds to 110.

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REFERENCE

1. Sarkar R, Basu S, Agarwal RK, Gupta P. Skin care for the newborn. Indian Pediatr 2010, 47: 593 - 598.

Reply

We thank the author for his pertinent comments regarding the article. Although the exact duration of time of application of shampoo on the baby's scalp is not discussed in the literature, a baby shampoo should not be used more than once a week. Only a small blob of shampoo should be used to form a lather and then rinsed off within few minutes.