Cardiospasm with Associated Pulmonary Disease

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A recent report by Rothstein and Pirkle\(^1\) calls attention to cardiospasm as a condition predisposing to the aspiration of foreign material into the lungs. They report a case of subacute pulmonary disease in a woman with cardiospasm and refer to a few other reports in the literature. Their patient had acid fast bacilli found on culture of sputum and these were considered not to be tubercle bacilli. They quote three cases from the literature in all of which acid fast bacilli other than the tubercle bacillus had been cultured from the sputum in the presence of subacute or chronic disease of the lung associated with cardiospasm.

On the basis of two cases from the literature and their own case they suggest the syndrome may be radiologically recognizable ("Bilateral upper lobe dense infiltrations with highlights, associated with widening to the right of the mediastinal shadow. The pulmonary lesion is found chiefly at the bases of the upper lobes and so reaches down farther on the left. Coarse infiltration may be present in the lower lung fields").

CASE REPORT

Mrs. C., age 51 in 1946. This woman first developed symptoms of cardiospasm in 1919 and had very severe symptoms, which have continued with diminishing frequency and severity. She had pneumonia first in 1918, with influenza. In 1933, she suffered a severe illness diagnosed, without x-ray, as pneumonia with lung abscess and in 1937, had an acute pneumonic illness which failed to resolve. She was investigated in a sanatorium in 1938 and was told she was tuberculous and advised to return to the sanatorium. As a result of this advice she consulted the writer who gave her his opinion that the disease was a nontuberculous pulmonary fibrosis, but without recognition at that time of its relation to cardiospasm.

At the present time, she has little cough and scanty sputum and the radiological appearances are illustrated. Acid fast bacilli have not been found. In the last five years, rheumatoid arthritis has developed and led to permanent invalidism.

This case is presented as a further example of fibrosing pneumonitis associated with cardiospasm and thought related to the aspiration of foreign material overflowing into the trachea from the oesophagus as a result of the cardiospasm.
SUMMARY

A case is reported in which cardiospasm is associated with chronic pulmonary disease and in which the chest x-ray has a characteristic appearance. The literature contains reports of similar cases. The pulmonary disease is thought to be caused by aspiration of contents from the dilated oesophagus.

RESUMEN

Se informa sobre un caso de cardioespasmo asociado con enfermedad pulmonar crónica en el que la radiografía del tórax reveló un aspecto característico. Se encuentran informes semejantes en la literatura. Se cree que la aspiración del contenido del esófago ensanchado causa la enfermedad pulmonar.

REFERENCE