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Endocarditis of a Prosthetic Valve

Dejan Nesic*

Department of Medical Biotechnologies, Division of Cardiology, University of Siena, Italy

Introduction

Prosthetic Valve Endocarditis (PVE) is an uncommon and serious consequence of valve replacement that is associated with a high rate of morbidity and mortality, as opposed to Native Valve Endocarditis (NVE). There are two key issues: determining the diagnosis and treating PVE. PVE diagnosis is difficult, and it frequently necessitates the use of many imaging techniques in addition to routine microbiological tests. Although Transesophageal Echocardiography (TEE) is still the most common imaging tool for PVE diagnosis, other techniques including Computed Tomography (CT) and 18F-fluodeoxyglucose positron emission tomography/CT are frequently required [1].

To avoid a fatal outcome, persistent fever, embolic complications, valve dehiscence, intracardial abscess, heart failure, and staphylococcal and fungal PVE all necessitate surgical therapy. Transcatheter valve implantations and devices have substantially complicated the diagnostic and treatment approaches to PVE patients. Despite advances in understanding of the pathogenesis and management of PVE, the best treatment remains a point of contention. To develop therapy methods for this potentially lethal consequence, more research is needed [2,3].

Prosthetic Valve Endocarditis (PVE) is a significant, life-threatening consequence of valve replacement that accounts for 10–30% of all instances of Infective Endocarditis (IE) and has a 0.3–1.2% annual incidence. Patients who have prosthetic heart valves are at a higher risk of having IE. The incidence and survival rates of PVE on mechanical and biological prosthetic valves have been found to be different. The mortality rate of PVE has fallen dramatically over time, from 56 to 60 percent in the 1970s to 22.8 percent at the turn of the century, thanks to breakthroughs in diagnostic and therapy. However, mortality remains high, and one reason for this could be that complications are more common as a result of unique pathophysiology, particularly in early PVE. The infection can harm both mechanical and bioprosthetic valves, and the frequency is identical at 5 years (5.7 percent). During the first three months after surgery, mechanical valves appear to be at a higher risk of infection. Given the significant variations in causative microorganisms between PVE that arises within one year of surgery and PVE that occurs later, the cut-off point for defining early and late PVE is generally agreed to be 12 months following surgical intervention. Early PVE (lasting a year) is most typically found in the first two months following valve replacement and is caused by microorganisms invading the prosthesis during the valve replacement procedure or by hematogenic spread in the first days or months [4].

About the study

Microorganisms entering the prosthetic ring disrupt perivalvular tissue, increasing the likelihood of abscess, pseudoaneurysm, or fistula formation, as well as valvular dehiscence. The absence of mechanical prosthesis endothelization in the early postoperative phase contributes to the thrombotic risk. Candida-related PVE is an uncommon but deadly condition, with fatality rates ranging from 37 to 62.5 percent in documented case studies. This PVE is primarily caused by nosocomial or healthcare-associated infections [5].

There isn't a single clinical presenting characteristic that is unique to PVE. The majority of patients present with a fever and a loss of appetite. Because these symptoms are so common after surgery, they are sometimes overlooked. PVE is indicated by a new heart murmur, left bundle brunch block, heart failure, or embolic events. Osler's nodes, Janeway's lesions, and Roth's patches are not commonly seen in these patients. A myocardial infarction could arise as a result of coronary artery embolization. A ruptured valve is frequently the leading cause of sudden death. As with native valve endocarditis, PVE is diagnosed by positive blood cultures and echocardiographic evidence of vegetation, paravalvular abscess, fistula, or valve dehiscence (NVE). Blood cultures, on the other hand, are frequently sterile, especially in the early stages of PVE, due to previous antibiotic usage. Blood cultures are positive in 90% of patients with PVE when antibiotics have not been given before. A single blood culture with isolated coagulase-negative Staphylococcus, in addition to sterile samples, could pose a diagnostic challenge, necessitating a DNA test with pulsed-field gel electrophoresis to rule out PVE. PVE may have developed a polyclonal infection as a result of direct contamination of the operating environment.

PVE has a number of side effects, including consistently positive blood cultures, septic embolism, heart failure, and death. In patients with prosthetic valve endocarditis, persistent infection and heart failure are the biggest predictors of in-hospital mortality. PVE problems, while similar to those seen in NVE patients, are more difficult to treat. The precise definition of persistent bacteremia or relapse is difficult to come across because the length of bacteremia is determined by the bacterium. *S. viridans* infections can become sterile after 48 hours, whereas bacteremia positive blood cultures in methicillin-resistant *S. aureus* (MRSA) infections can be observed even after 7 days of treatment. Septic embolism increases mortality and morbidity when combined with PVE. It can present as a brain, splenic, or renal abscess, similar to NVE. The incidence of stroke was found to be 23% in a group of 111 patients with PVE. In addition, 42 percent of PVE patients developed hemorrhagic transformation, most likely as a result of anticoagulant medication, which is commonly used in these settings.

Conclusion

PVE is a major possible complication of valve replacement surgery that is associated with a high death rate. It's not easy to come up with a diagnosis. Several imaging methods with a strong sensitivity-to-specificity ratio are now accessible. However, echocardiography is still the preferred method. Because of the complexity of PVE and the high-risk profile of these individuals due to numerous comorbidities, treating PVE is even more difficult. Staphylococcal ethology, dense vegetation with a high risk of embolization, paravalvular or myocardial abscess, fistula, valve dehiscence, and heart failure are all causes for immediate medical and surgical treatment. The exact timing of surgery and the type of heart valve used are still up for dispute. The emergence of transcatheter valve implantations and devices revolutionized the way PVE patients were treated. To develop therapy methods for this potentially lethal consequence, more research is needed.

***Address for Correspondence:** Dejan Nesic, Department of Medical Biotechnologies, Division of Cardiology, University of Siena, Italy, Email: Dejan.n@usi.it*

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest associated with this manuscript.

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