

Follicular conjunctivitis: rare presentation of ocular bartonellosis

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ABSTRACT

Cat scratch disease is a disease caused by gram negative bacteria *Bartonella henselae*. About 5–10% of cases develop ocular bartonellosis which typically presents with an array of posterior segment findings, neuroretinitis and Parinaud oculoglandular syndrome. We describe an atypical case of ocular Bartonellosis with bilateral chronic follicular conjunctivitis without any systemic or posterior segment involvement. A 14-year-old Malaysian girl with underlying bronchial asthma, eczema and allergic conjunctivitis presented with 3-months history of bilateral eye discomfort and redness with conjunctival follicle and was treated as chronic allergic conjunctivitis. However, her symptoms persist despite on treatment. She has progressively developed bilateral eye limbitis and ocular examination revealed visual acuity 6/9 OU. Slit lamp examination showed bilateral fine follicles over superior palpebral conjunctiva, conjunctiva was mildly injected with limbitis with clear cornea IOP were 16 mmHg for both eyes. Funduscopy were normal for both eyes. Systemic examination showed unremarkable and showed no lymphadenopathy. Blood investigations showed raised *Bartonella henselae* IgM titre. Patient was started on oral Azithromycin for total of 21 days and topical steroid eye drops, and she showed significant improvement with treatment. Although atypical, cases of non-specific follicular conjunctivitis have been reported. Diagnosis is often arrived by high titer of antibody to *Bartonella henselae*. Ocular bartonellosis is generally self-limiting, however cases of severe progression have been reported, early treatment is shown to speed recovery.