

Miller-Fisher Syndrome at King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital

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Background: Miller-Fisher syndrome (MFS), a variant of Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) is a self-limiting demyelinating disease of the peripheral nervous system. Clinical spectrum, natural history, prognosis, and pathogenesis of MFS are not fully documented.

Objective: Probe the clinical features of MFS in a tertiary center in Thailand and compare its pattern with other Asian countries.

Material and Method: The clinical recordings were searched from databases at King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital (KCMH) between 2002 and 2007. Keywords were "Miller-Fisher syndrome" and "Guillain-Barré syndrome". Cases with MFS were recruited. The data regarding clinical features, course, treatments, and investigations were reviewed. Comparisons with other large Asian series were demonstrated.

Results: Six patients (male: female; 3:3) with MFS were analyzed. The incident rate is 7.7% that of GBS. The median age was 54.3 years (range 28 to 73 years). MFS frequently started with diplopia followed by ophthalmoplegia and ataxia. Other clinical symptoms included limb dysesthesia and weakness, dysphagia, dysarthria, and diffuse headache. Spontaneous recovery occurred in three patients while two patients received plasmapheresis and one received intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG). Six months after neurological deficits, all patients were almost free of symptoms and had returned to their normal activities.

Conclusion: The incidence, clinical features, and prognosis of MFS in KCMH were comparable with the previous studies in other Asian countries. High percentage of limb dysesthesia and optic neuropathy were detected in the present series. Headache was also common among Thai MFS. Immuno-pathogenesis of MFS is well documented but immunomodulatory therapy should be considered only in some cases.

Keywords: Miller-Fisher syndrome, Guillain-Barré syndrome

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Miller-Fisher syndrome (MFS) was described in 1956 and it has been considered a variant of Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS)⁽¹⁾. The syndrome is characterized by a triad of acute gait ataxia, ophthalmoplegia, and areflexia⁽¹⁾. MFS occurred approximately 1-5% that of GBS in Western countries^(2,3). The incidence of MFS as a proportion of GBS has been reported to be higher in East Asia^(4,5). Previous studies showed an incidence of MFS making up 25% of GBS patients in Japan and

18% in Taiwan^(4,5). The difference may be related to host and genetic factors⁽⁴⁾. Since MFS is rare, its clinical spectrum, natural history, and prognosis are not fully documented. The purpose of the present study was to review clinical features of MFS admitted to King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital (KCMH) and to ascertain whether a pattern of the MFS in Thailand is identical to MFS in other Asian countries.

Material and Method

The clinical recordings were searched from databases at KCMH between 2002 and 2007. Keywords were "Miller-Fisher syndrome" and "Guillain-Barré

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syndrome". Clinical diagnosis of MFS was documented by the clinical trial of gait ataxia, ophthalmoplegia, and areflexia⁽¹⁾. GBS was diagnosed according to Asbury and Cornblath's clinical criteria⁽⁶⁾. Data on age, sex, history of antecedent infection, presenting symptom, clinical manifestations, CSF analysis, electrodiagnostic tests, imaging of the brain, treatment, and clinical course of the syndrome were analyzed. Two large series of MFS in Asia were selected from Pub Med for comparison.

Results

Six patients (male: female; 3:3) with MFS and 78 patients with GBS were recruited. The incident rate of MFS was 7.7% that of GBS. The mean age was 54.3 years (range 28 to 73 years). MFS was found throughout the year, predominantly in cool season (October to January: 4 patients). Respiratory tract infection symptoms occurred within 1 month before MFS onset was noted in five patients (83%). The interval between the onset of infection and neurological symptoms was 3.5 days (range 1-7 days). Acute onset of diplopia was a presenting symptom in all cases and four of them had mild gait ataxia on the same day. Total ophthalmoplegia was documented in all patients. Incomplete bilateral ptosis was noted in four patients and no ptosis was detected in two patients. All of the patients had no abnormal pupil light reflex due to third nerve palsy. The median duration of diplopia to total ophthalmoplegia was 4 days (range 2-7 days). Other neurological deficits were limb weakness (1 patient), dysesthesia in glove and stocking pattern (4 patients), dysarthria (2 patients), dysphagia (1 patient), unilateral peripheral-type facial weakness (2 patients), dyschromatopsia and bilateral optic neuropathies (1 patient), and diffuse headache (3 patients). All of these associated features except facial weakness simultaneously occurred within the clinical course of MFS triad. A patient with facial weakness developed the deficit on day 12 after the onset and during the recovery of MFS. None of the patients in the present series had impaired proprioception or autonomic disturbances. Nerve conduction studies were performed within the second week after the onset of the syndrome in four patients and revealed prolonged distal motor latencies as well as slow motor conduction velocities in three patients, prolonged F-wave in two patients. Lumbar puncture was done in five patients within 1 week after the onset and was not done in one patient due to previous laminectomy and lumbar fusion. The CSF profiles were normal in one

patient and revealed albumino-cytologic dissociation in 4 patients. All patients had normal computer tomographic (CT) finding. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) was performed in three patients and no abnormality had been detected. The average duration of admission in hospital for all patients was 15.7 days (range 6 to 30 days). Immunomodulatory treatment was prescribed in three patients due to rapid progression of limbs and bulbar weakness: two received plasmapheresis and one received intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG). Gait ataxia gradually improved in 10 days and fully recovered in 2 weeks while ophthalmoplegia gradually improved in 10 days and fully recovered within 3 months. Areflexia recovered within 3 months in five patients and one patient still has areflexia after 1 year of follow up. Limb dysesthesia spontaneously recovered in 1 week. Limbs and bulbar weakness were gradually improved in 1 week after immunomodulatory treatment. Facial weakness was improved in 3 weeks. Bilateral optic neuropathies were spontaneously improved in 2 weeks and fully recovered in 6 weeks. Headache recovered within 1 week. All patients had normal activities of daily living at 6 months. The individual case in the present series and the comparison of this series with other two series from Japan and Taiwan are summarized in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively.

Discussion

The high incident rate of MFS among GBS in KCMH as compared to the incident rate in the Western countries was parallel with the previous study in Japan and Taiwan^(4,5). Seasonal variations, associated with MFS was also documented in this series and other Asian countries⁽²⁻⁵⁾. Majority of MFS cases were associated with a non specific pathogen that causes upper respiratory tract infection^(4,5,7-9). The demographic data and clinical features of MFS in this series were comparable to other large series in Asian countries except for high percentage of limb dysesthesia as well as optic neuropathy in the present series and abnormal proprioception and autonomic involvement in other series^(4,5) (Table 2). The differences may be due to small sample size in the present series. Typical CSF albumino-cytologic dissociation, which is usually documented in MFS and GBS⁽⁹⁻¹¹⁾, was also detected in the present study. Diverse peripheral conduction abnormalities in this and other series^(4,9,10), which was different from a more classical pattern in GBS, reflected a variation in the pathogenesis of the two syndromes.

Table 1. Miller-Fisher syndrome at King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital between 2002-2007

Case	Date	Age (years)/ Sex	Antecedent infection	Time to total ophthalmoplegia	Clinical symptoms	Electrodiagnostic test	Imaging of the brain	CSF examination	Treatment	Outcome
1	Jan 2003	59/M	Non specific URI	4 days	Diplopia, ptosis, headache	Prolonged Normal DML, DSL, NCV	Normal	Not done	Conservative	Improved in 14 days Complete recovery at 4 weeks
2	April 2005	44/F	Non specific URI 7 days PTA	2 days	Diplopia, ataxia, ptosis, headache, dysesthesia, mild weakness	Prolonged DML, DSL, NCV	Normal	WBC2 (L) Protein 23.5 Sugar 52/79	Plasmapheresis 5 days	Improved in 22 days Complete recovery at 8 weeks
3	Aug 2006	62/F	Non specific URI	7 days	Diplopia, ptosis, headache, bilateral visual loss	Prolonged DML, NCV, DSL, F-wave	Normal	Acellular Protein 66 Sugar 76/120	Conservative	Improved in 21 days Complete recovery at 7 weeks
4	Oct 2006	60/M	Non specific URI 5 days PTA	5 days	Diplopia, ataxia, dysesthesia	Not done	Normal	WBC 2 (L) Protein 40 Sugar 81/168	Plasmapheresis 4 days	Improved in 21 days Complete recovery at 12 weeks
5	Nov 2006	73/F	-	2 days	Diplopia, ptosis, dysesthesia, dysarthria	Prolonged DML, DSL, NCV	Normal	WBC4 (L) Protein 25 Sugar 51/121	IVIg x 5 days	Improved in 12 days Develop Lt. facial palsy (LMN) day 12 Complete recovery at 12 weeks
6	Dec 2007	28/M	Non specific URI 4 days PTA	4 days	Diplopia, ataxia, ataxia, dysphagia, dysarthria, dysesthesia	Normal	Normal	Acellular Protein 76 Sugar 60/90	Conservative	Improved in 14 days Develop Lt. facial palsy (LMN) day 11 Complete recovery at 3 weeks

Table 2. Comparison of clinical series of MFS in Asia

Clinical series	Mori et al ⁽⁴⁾ (n = 50)	Lyu et al ⁽⁵⁾ (n = 32)	MFS in KCMH (n = 6)
Incident rate	25% of GBS	18% of GBS	7.7% of GBS
Mean age	NM	45 years	54 years
Sex	Male	No difference	No difference
Season/Temperature	Spring/15-23°C	Spring/15-23°C	Winter/23-28°C
Upper respiratory track infection	76%	56%	83%
Acute gastroenteritis	4%	0%	0%
Clinical features (%)			
Ataxia	100%	100%	100%
Areflexia	100%	100%	100%
Ophthalmoplegia	100%	100%	100%
Ptosis	58%	59%	67%
Pupillary abnormalities	42%	NM	0%
Limb weakness	20%	25%	17%
Limb dysesthesia	24%	34%	67%
Abnormal proprioception	18%	NM	0%
Autonomic involvement	8%	3%	0%
Optic neuropathy	0%	0%	17%
Facial palsy	32%	50%	33%
Bulbar palsy	26%	59%	33%
Headache	NM	40%	50%

NM: not mentioned

MFS and GBS are postulated to be a peripheral demyelinating autoimmune disease^(1,9,10). However, there are occasional reports of central nervous system involvement such as supranuclear gaze palsy and optic neuropathy⁽¹²⁾. Imaging of the brain usually was normal but occasionally showed lesions in the brainstem, cerebral white matter, spinocerebellar tract, and cerebellum providing evidence supporting central nervous involvement⁽¹³⁻¹⁵⁾.

Several studies showed evidence supported molecular mimicry between ganglioside GQ1b, a major composition of myelin in peripheral nerve and lipopolysaccharide in some infectious agents especially *Campylobacter jejuni*^(8,11,16-22). Ganglioside GQ1b is abundantly detected in cranial nerve III, IV, VI, optic nerve, dorsal root ganglia, presynaptic neuromuscular junction⁽²³⁾ and anti-GQ1b antibody has been detected in MFS and GBS patients who had ophthalmoplegia as well as optic neuropathy^(17,20-25). The role of this antibody and pathogenesis of these cranial neuropathies has been strongly suggested^(16,19,25). The ophthalmoplegia and ptosis, which are the cardinal features of MFS, are interesting neurological signs and had been documented in other series as well as the present series. Ophthalmoplegia without ptosis may

occur in MFS, a variant of GBS while ptosis without other signs of oculomotor weakness may occur in GBS^(2,5). Immunologic abnormalities affected oculomotor nerve in both GBS and MFS can be localized and selective. Peripheral type facial weakness also occurred in about 30-50% of MFS^(4,5,26). However, ganglioside GQ1b is not abundant in cranial VII⁽²³⁾. The pathomechanism of facial palsy in these syndromes may be different and other unknown antibodies may be contributing factors⁽²⁷⁾. Mechanism of ataxia in MFS has not been fully explained⁽⁹⁾. It is possible that the anti-GQ1b antibodies against dorsal root ganglion and neuromuscular terminal in muscle spindle afferents⁽²⁸⁾ will contribute to the ataxia and proprioceptive sensation impairment⁽²⁸⁾. Interestingly, headache is not uncommon in MFS and has been detected in 7-40% of MFS cases^(5,29). The pathogenesis of the headache in patients with MFS is debated⁽³⁰⁾. Some authors suggested that headache in MFS may be related to the central nervous system involvement^(12,13) but neuroimaging, which have been usually normal, did not support this hypothesis. Mild increased intracranial pressure from CSF outflow obstruction at arachnoid granulations caused by the effect of increased CSF protein is another theory⁽³⁰⁾. However, the headache in

MFS usually started days before the elevation of CSF protein. Headache from demyelination of the cervical and cranial sensory nerves caused by antibodies to gangliosides and resulting in activation of the trigeminovascular pain pathway, may be the most challenging suggestion^(30,31). MFS is usually a self-limiting syndrome but about 5% of cases may have a progressive course and have clinical features of full-blown GBS^(4,5,32). Immunomodulatory treatments included plasmapheresis and IVIG used in GBS have been applied in MFS^(33,34). It is reasonable to advocate these specific treatments in an MFS patient who has associated clinical features of rapid progression of limb, bulbar, or respiratory weakness^(9,35,36). The overall natural history of MFS is benign and most of the patients have a full recovery⁽⁹⁾.

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กลุ่มอาการมิลเลอร์ ฟิชเชอร์ ที่พบในโรงพยาบาลจุฬาลงกรณ์

ประวีณ ไหล่เลขา, กัมมันต์ พันธุมจินดา

ภูมิหลัง: กลุ่มอาการมิลเลอร์ ฟิชเชอร์ เป็นกลุ่มอาการผันแปรของกลุ่มอาการ กิลแลงแบเร่ ซึ่งมีการทำลายของปลอกประสาทในระบบประสาทส่วนปลาย และสามารถหายได้เอง อาการทางคลินิก การดำเนินโรค การพยากรณ์โรค และพยาธิสภาพยังไม่เป็นที่ทราบแน่ชัด การศึกษาในครั้งนี้มีจุดประสงค์ เพื่อศึกษาถึงอาการทางคลินิกของกลุ่มอาการมิลเลอร์ ฟิชเชอร์ในประเทศไทยเปรียบเทียบกับประเทศอื่นๆในทวีปเอเชีย

วัตถุประสงค์และวิธีการ: ได้ทำการรวบรวมบันทึกข้อมูลทางคลินิกจากฐานข้อมูลของโรงพยาบาลจุฬาลงกรณ์ระหว่างปี พ.ศ. 2545-2550 รหัสคำคือ “กลุ่มอาการมิลเลอร์ ฟิชเชอร์” และ “กลุ่มอาการกิลแลงแบเร่” ผู้ป่วยที่วินิจฉัยว่าเป็นกลุ่มอาการมิลเลอร์ ฟิชเชอร์ ถูกนำมาศึกษา อาการทางคลินิก การดำเนินโรค ผลการรักษา และการตรวจทางห้องปฏิบัติการ ได้ถูกรวบรวม วิเคราะห์ และเปรียบเทียบกับการศึกษาอื่นในประเทศในทวีปเอเชีย

ผลการศึกษา: ได้วิเคราะห์ผู้ป่วยจำนวน 6 ราย (ผู้ชาย: ผู้หญิง, 3:3) ที่มีอาการของกลุ่มอาการมิลเลอร์ ฟิชเชอร์ อุบัติการณ์ของกลุ่มอาการนี้คิดเป็น 7.7% ของกลุ่มอาการกิลแลงแบเร่ อายุระหว่าง 28-73 ปี (เฉลี่ย 54.3 ปี) อาการนำของกลุ่มอาการนี้มักเริ่มจากอาการมองเห็นภาพซ้อน กล้ามเนื้ออึดควบคุมการเคลื่อนไหวของตาเป็นอัมพาต และอาการเดินเซ อาการอื่น ๆ ที่พบ ได้แก่ อาการชาและอ่อนแรงที่รยางค์ อาการกลืนลำบาก อาการพูดไม่ชัด และอาการปวดศีรษะ ผู้ป่วย 3 รายอาการดีขึ้นเองในขณะที่ผู้ป่วย 2 รายได้รับการรักษาโดยการล้างเลือด และผู้ป่วยอีก 1 รายได้รับการรักษาโดยอิมมูโนโกลบูลินทางหลอดเลือดดำ ผู้ป่วยทุกรายอาการดีขึ้น และใช้ชีวิตได้ตามปกติ 6 เดือน หลังจากเริ่มมีอาการทางระบบประสาท

สรุป: อุบัติการณ์ และอาการทางคลินิกของกลุ่มอาการมิลเลอร์ ฟิชเชอร์ที่พบในโรงพยาบาลจุฬาลงกรณ์ ใกล้เคียงกับการศึกษาอื่น ๆ ในประเทศในทวีปเอเชีย อาการชาที่รยางค์ที่พบมากขึ้น และอาการเส้นประสาทตาพิการพบได้จากการศึกษานี้ อาการปวดศีรษะพบได้บ่อยในกลุ่มอาการมิลเลอร์ ฟิชเชอร์ในคนไทย กลไกการเกิดกลุ่มอาการมิลเลอร์ ฟิชเชอร์ มีหลักฐานชัดเจนว่าเกิดจากพยาธิสภาพทางภูมิคุ้มกัน แต่การรักษาด้วยวิธีการปรับภูมิคุ้มกันควรพิจารณาใช้ในบางราย
