A 4-YEAR-OLD BOY WITH BECKWITH WIEDEMANN SYNDROME (BWS)

Aleksandra Janchevska1, Velibor Tasic1, Nevenka Laban1, Momir Polenakovic2, Zoran Gucev1, Nadine Bachmann3, Carsten Bergmann1

1 Medical Faculty, Skopje, Republic of Macedonia
2 Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Skopje, Republic of Macedonia
3 Center for Human Genetics, Bioscientia Institute for Medical Diagnostics Ingelheim, Germany

Corresponding author: Aleksandra Janchevska, MD, Medical faculty Skopje, 50th Division, 1000 Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, Mob. Tel: +389 70 305 685, e-mail: dr.sasha1969@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Objectives: Molecular characterization of a patient with BWS.
Clinical presentation and intervention: A 4-year-old boy with overgrowth (weight above 99th and height at 99th percentile) had longitudinal hemihypertrophy of the tongue and left cheek. In addition, there was a difference of one centimeter in the circumference of the left and right leg. Molecular genetic analysis revealed hypomethylation of KvDRM1 (LIT1) in the imprinting control region-2 (ICR2) on chromosome 11p15.5 and a normal methylation pattern of the H19-differentially methylated region (H19-DMR) in the ICR1. The estimated tumor risk was 1-5%.
Conclusion: This patient with clinical characteristics of BWS has an imprinting defect associated with a low risk of embryonal tumors.

Keywords: Beckwith Wiedemann Syndrome (BWS), overgrowth, hypomethylation, embryonal tumors

INTRODUCTION

Beckwith-Wiedemann syndrome (BWS/MIM 130650), an overgrowth syndrome with tumor predisposition, is clinically very heterogeneous. It is characterized by macrosomia (weight and height more than the 97th percentile for the patient’s age and sex), macroglossia, visceromegaly (in one or more intra-abdominal organs), embryonal tumors (Wilms tumor, hepatoblastoma, neuroblastoma, and rhabdomyosarcoma), omphalocele, hypoglycemia in 30-50% of neonates, ear creases/pits, adrenocortical cytomegaly, and renal abnormalities (medullary dysplasia, nephrocalcinosis, medullary sponge kidney, and nephromegaly). The overall estimated BWS occurrence is about 1/13 in 700 healthy individuals [1, 2, 3].

Prematurity, macroglossia, hypoglycemia, tumors or cardiomyopathy may be the cause of death in infancy. A mortality of 20% was reported [4]. However, this seems to be exaggerated as there are improved treatment options and BWs tends to be earlier diagnosed.
CLINICAL PRESENTATION AND INTERVENTION

We present a now 4-year-old boy, with overgrowth and longitudinal hemihypertrophy of the tongue and left cheek, delivered with elective Cesarean section due to fetal macrosomia. His birth weight was 4600 grams (+2.9 SDS), 99.8th percentile and birth length 53cm (+1.83 SDS), 96.6th percentile. The boy was initially referred at the age of 1.5 months with weight of 6.9 kg (+2.7 SDS) and length of 61cm (+2.1 SDS) (Fig.1 and Fig.2). At the age of four years his height was at the 99.6th (+2.12 SDS) percentile, weight was above the 99th percentile (+4.42 SDS) and BMI z-score was 2.86 (above the 99th percentile) (Fig. 3). There was a difference of one centimeter in the circumference between his left and right leg, but not in their length or in the circumference or length of his arms.

Ultrasound scan found aortal valve stenosis, mild hypertrophy of the liver, moderate hypertrophy of the kidneys, especially the left one. The brain US was uneventful. Karyotype was 46, XY. There was no evidence of hypoglycemia.

Molecular genetic deletion/duplication analysis of the BWS/SRS critical region 11p15 and analysis of the methylation status of H19-DMR (differentially methylated region) and KvDRM1 (LIT1) in 11p15.5 was performed with MLPA (multiplex ligation-dependent probe am-
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A 4-YEAR-OLD BOY WITH BECKWITH WIEDEMANN SYNDROME (BWS) plification) using the SALSA ME030-C3 BWS/ SRS DV29 kit [5]. There was a normal methylation pattern for H19-DMR and hypomethylation of KvDRM1 (LIT1) in the chromosome 11p15.5 region with an estimated tumor risk of 1-5%.

A written informed consent was obtained from his parents for the analysis of the blood samples, DNA extraction, medical photography and publishing.

DISCUSSION

The presence of three major or two major and one minor feature is used to assign a clinical or working diagnosis of BWS [2].

Normal karyotypes were found in most patients with BWS [4]. Nevertheless in ~1% patients there are chromosomal abnormalities. Our patient had normal male karyotype.

BWS is usually sporadic.

Several abnormalities of the regulation of gene transcription in the imprinted domain on the chromosome 11p15.5 region have been observed: loss of methylation at imprinting control region-2 (ICR2) (KvDMR1) on the maternal chromosome, gain of methylation at imprinting control region-1 (ICR1) (H19-DMR) on the maternal chromosome or paternal uniparental disomy of chromosome 11 (UPD (11)) [6]. Some 10-15% of BWS patients have a positive family history for BWS [4], mostly caused by maternally transmitted mutations in the growth suppressor gene CDKN1C, but also due to copy number variations in the chromosomal region 11p.15 [6].

The higher prevalence of malignancies in BWS has been recognized requiring a close follow-up. An established hypothesis that tumor predisposition in BWS patients is related to the imprinting status of the H19-DMR and KvDMR1 on chromosome 11p15.5 was confirmed by Rump et al. 2005 in a meta-analysis of five studies [7]. He revealed a strong association between a loss of imprinting (LOI) of the H19-DMR and higher tumor risk, especially development of Wilms tumor in these patients. The highest risk (35-45%) can be recognized in children with a normal methylation pattern of the KvDMR1 and hypermethylation of the H19-DMR. In addition, patients with paternal UPD have more susceptibility to cancer, but also hemihypertrophy and neonatal hypoglycemia.

The BWS Registry [8] was used to confirm the hypothesis that different epigenetic alterations could be associated with particular phenotypes in BWS patients. Hypomethylation of KvDRM1 (LIT1) in 11p15.5 is the most common cause for BWS and it can be detected in nearly 50% of patients with this syndrome [7]. The risk for BWS patients with hypomethylation of KvDMR1 to manifest embryonal tumors is estimated to be 1-5%. In our boy, the detected hypomethylation of KvDRM1 is the most likely molecular cause for its BWS phenotype.

There was no evidence of severe neonatal or early childhood manifestations in our patient although he fulfilled clinical criteria of the disease. Hemihyperplasia may affect separate body regions or selected organs and tissues in these patients and is due to an increased cell number in those parts of the body. Our boy had mild liver and moderate left kidney hypertrophy confirmed on US accompanied with left longitudinal tongue hemihypertrophy. Tongue reduction in severe macroglossia should be done during infancy or early childhood from the 2nd till the 4th year.

Growth rate acceleration BWS starts in the second half of pregnancy and early infancy, and slows around the age of seven or eight years, the final height remains at the upper range for their age and sex. Our boy was growing at the 99th percentile and he was obese for his height (weight +4.42 SDS and BMI z-score 2.86).

Three monthly monitorings of serum glucose and alpha-fetoprotein (AFP) concentrations were within normal range. We continued the follow up with abdominal US every three months until the age of eight years [2, 7, 9, 10]. We will continue with annual kidney ultrasound after the age of eight years to mid-adolescence for prevention of nephrocalcinosis or medullary sponge kidney disease as secondary complications [4].

Prenatal screening is possible with chorionic villi sampling (CVS) for families with an inherited chromosome abnormality, or by molecular genetic testing for families in which the molecular mechanism of BWS has been defined.

CONCLUSION

We present a patient with a BWS phenotype and molecular genetic detection of hypomethylation in the KvDMR1 in the imprinted
chromosomal region 11p15.5, indicating a low risk of embryonal tumors. Clinical management is strongly influenced by the type of genetic abnormality observed. Determining the molecular defect made the genetic counseling possible. Children with clinical features of BWS should undergo specific molecular analysis.

REFERENCES

Клиничка презентација и интервенција: Четиригодишно момче со прекумерен раст (тежина над 99-тиот и висина на 99-иот перцентил) имаше надложна хемишипертрофија на јазикот и на левиот образ. Покрај тоа, имаше разлика од еден сантиметар во обемот на левата и десната нога. Молекуларната генетска анализа откри хипометилација на KvDRM1 (LIT1) во импринтинг-контролниот регион 2 (ICR2) на хромозомот 11p15.5 и нормален модел за метилација на $H19$-диференцирачки метилиран регион ($H19$-DMR) во ICR1. Проценетот ризик за појава на тумори изнесуваше 1–5 %.

Заклучок: Опишаниот пациент со клинички карактеристики на БВС има вроден/импринтинг дефект, кој е асоцииран со низок ризик од ембрионални тумори.

Ключни зборови: Беквит Видеман синдром (БВС), прекумерен раст, хипометилација, ембрионални тумори