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Dr. Brown Paget’s Disease

Paget’s disease is when there’s bone resorption in great amounts followed by new bone being formed. The area where this new bone if being formed tends to be larger in size, contains new blood vessels, but is also weaker than the previous bone that was replaced. Usually the bone that is affected tends to be in one or two areas of the body, sometimes is all over. The etiology of Paget’s disease as of now is unknown, but some say it may be due to an early viral infection in life or possibly genetic. Some of the clinical objective symptoms may be either no symptoms and if there are symptoms, they may include hearing loss, weight loss, and heat coming off affected area as well as bone pain. Some of the subjective symptoms seen on these patients clinically is enlargement of affected area such as skull, usually the maxilla, and bowing of chest and legs. The age of those affected by Paget’s disease is said to be over 60 years old. The sex is usually seen more commonly with men and in those with European background. Some of the diagnosis for Paget’s disease is having a blood test to see if alkaline phosphates are elevated. There can also be a test done to see if there’s high numbers of bone breakdown such as N-Telopeptide. An x-ray can also be done in order to diagnose this disease, we would see thickening of the bone in these radiographs as well as a cotton wool appearance. Treatment for these patients sometimes is not necessary, but for those who do need treatment, it’s when the following occur:

* Whenever there’s bones in our body that are critical in our daily activities, such as those that support our weight
* When there’s bone resorption that happens quiet fast and treatment must occur in order to maintain the bones structure as normal as possible
* Pain is present
* When the skulls structure is affected
* There can also be medications that can help with the treatment of Paget’s disease such as Bisphosphonates, Calcitonin, Acetaminophen or even surgery.

Some of the prognosis with treatment is that for example when the skull structure gets affected, there must be treatment done fast in order for hearing not to be lost. Another prognosis with treatment is that when we use Bisphosphonates, it can help lower the remodeling process of bone. There’s also another drug that can help with treatment and it’s Calcitonin which is a hormone that helps in the metabolism of bone. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) can also be provided to help with pain. There’s also prognosis without treatment, which can lead to surgery in order to help establish bone back to its original structure. Another prognosis without treatment is that Paget’s disease can lead to Paget’s sarcoma, which is very harmful. Paget’s disease does have a differential diagnosis, its Osteomalacia, which can also show elevated levels of alkaline phosphates and also both of these disorders can lead to bone fracture. Paget’s disease is relevant to Dental Hygiene because when we take a look at radiographs and if we see a cotton wool appearance on it, it’s a clue something’s not right and it can possibly be Paget’s disease, of course we will need biopsy and other sources to confirm. It’s also relevant to us because if we have a patient describing symptoms such as heat coming off their head, or bowing of their chest or legs, it’s another sign that they may have Paget’s disease and we’re able to help them get treatment before it gets worst.

References:

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