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Acute brain edema in child anaphylaxis by ant bites

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Introduction: The ant stings can cause serious allergic reactions in sensitive individuals, often resulting in severe anaphylaxis. In most cases the reactions are confined to the site of the bite, 17 to 56% of patients have severe local reactions, 16% have extensive cutaneous rash and itch and angioedema and 0.6% to 4% life-threatening anaphylaxis. Neurotoxic reactions rarely occur, which include focal or generalized seizures, blurred vision, fainting, loss of consciousness, confusion, and peripheral neuropathy.

Case Report: HFR, 03 year-old male presented decreased level of consciousness, GCE 10 with signs of periorbital edema and insect bites on face and lower limbs. Also, subfebrile without focal signs. Fundoscopy showed papilledema. CT of the brain showed intense cerebral edema and severe cranial hypertension.

Results: We introduce steroids, antihistamine and mannitol in pediatric maximal dosage, with reversal of the clinical and CT scan in 10 hours. The child progressed well without neurological deficits. He was discharged from the pediatric ICU in 48 hours, and after seven days from hospital.

Discussion: The ants commonly found in Brazil belong to the species *Sonelopsis invicta*. Are very common in southeastern and southern Brazil. People bitten by ants may develop delayed hypersensitivity-type reactions, and eventually present severe allergic reactions to their bites. The neurological injuries, such as occurred in our patient, are rare. The mechanism of brain injury is probably due to neurotoxic venom induced by hypoxia or hypotension.

Conclusion: The ant stings can trigger important life-threatening allergic reactions in some people, especially if we consider that these insects have adapted to living inside houses. Due to the exposed above, all professionals working in emergency services should pay attention to the possibility of ant bites and look for characteristic lesions in the extremities, especially the legs.