

The Paget-Schroetter Syndrome: Work Accident and Occupational Disease

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Abstract

Introduction: Primary thrombosis of the upper extremity (Paget-Schroetter syndrome, effort thrombosis) is usually not accepted either as a work-related accident or an occupational disease by the industrial injuries insurance authorities. This study aims to look at the circumstances under which this kind of thrombosis may be recognised as an occupational hazard. **Materials and Methods:** After thoroughly studying the clinical records of 82 patients with thrombosis of the upper extremity in the outpatient department for angiology during a 10-year period, we found that in 51 cases the thrombosis was caused by secondary reasons (i.e., central venous catheterisation, malignoma, hypercoagulability, postoperative). In the remaining 31 patients, we painstakingly conducted a general and occupational history and further clinical, laboratory or technical investigations to differentiate the aetiology. **Results:** Twenty-eight of 31 patients with suspected primary thrombosis of the axillary or subclavian vein (Paget-Schroetter syndrome) showed unusual private or occupational physical exercise as the underlying cause. Sixteen patients reported only short physical exercise up to several hours or acute trauma. Longer physical exercise periods (several days, months or even more) were found in 12 patients. Ten of the 28 patients who acquired the thrombosis doing occupational tasks covered by the industrial insurance, may be eligible for compensation. In 4 of these 10 insured cases, we found strong hints for work accidents, 6 patients of this group apparently revealed criteria of occupational diseases. Four of the 28 patients had a combination of physical effort and additional thrombogenic risk factors (cardiac pacemaker, hypercoagulability). **Conclusion:** Primary thrombosis of the upper extremity (Paget-Schroetter syndrome) should be announced to and compensated by the industrial injuries insurance either as work-related accident or occupational disease if the patient's occupational history shows close relationship between thrombosis manifestation and extraordinary physical efforts or exercises during occupational strains. For this reason, we recommend the recognition of the Paget-Schroetter syndrome in the national list of occupational diseases.

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