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Original Article

Comparison of Culture and Serological Methods for the Diagnosis of Brucellosis

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Abstract

Introduction & Objective: Brucellosis is a zoonosis with worldwide distribution. Conventional methods for diagnosis of brucellosis include serologic tests and blood culture. The aim of this study was to compare the culture of clinical specimens and serologic test for the diagnosis of brucellosis.

Materials & Methods: In a 15-month period, all patients with clinical suspected brucellosis were enrolled in this comparative-descriptive study. Blood specimens for all patients were obtained for culture and serologic tests including wright, coombs' wright and 2ME. A questionnaire including demographic, clinical and paraclinical characteristics was completed for each subject.

Results: A total of 149 patients were enrolled in the study. The most common symptoms were fever, malaise, myalgia and sweating. Osteoarticular complications were observed in 106 (71.1 %) patients, of which, the most common type was sacroiliitis in 67 patients (45%). The results of serologic tests including wright, coombs' wright, and 2ME were positive in 88.6%, 87.5% and 88.5% of the patients. Also, culture of clinical specimens were positive in 38.3% of the patients, of which, serology was positive in 91.2% of the patients.

Conclusion: Serologic tests are useful for the diagnosis of brucellosis in most cases. Culture of blood and the clinical specimens are useful for definitive diagnosis even in patients with low titers of antibodies.

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