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An Atlantic Canadian Case of Disseminated Streptococcus equi Subspecies zooepidemicus Infection

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Abstract : Streptococcus equi subspecies zooepidemicus infections in humans can be contracted through contact with domestic animals or unpasteurized dairy products. Although infection in humans is rare, the course can be fulminant. We describe the case of a 75-year-old, immunocompetent male, who developed disseminated disease with bacteremia, native aortic valve endocarditis, suppurative pericarditis with cardiac tamponade, meningitis and bilateral endopthalmitis. Despite treatment with pericardial drain placement, intravenous ceftriaxone and rifampin the patient, unfortunately, did not survive. To date, reported cases of disseminated infection by S. zooepidemicus are few. Furthermore, with the review of the literature, this case demonstrates the broadest organ system involvement reported. Of interest, previous studies have suggested an affinity of this organism for certain organ systems and this case corroborates an emerging association of S. zooepidemicus with endopthalmitis. In addition, this is the second Canadian case of documented human infection with both cases being similar in clinical features, presentation, and geographical location. A discussion regarding previous S. zooepidemicus outbreaks and the potential for zoonotic outbreaks to occur is included. In short, this case report should serve to warn clinicians regarding complications and sites of haematogenous seeding in the setting of disseminated S. zooepidemicus infections.

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