

Original Research Article

Paediatrics

The Clinical and Biochemical Profiles and Outcomes of Dengue Fever and Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever in Children During a Dengue Outbreak in 2022 at a Tertiary Care Hospital in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Background: In 2022 the current dengue outbreak is unusual in its nature and seasonality. The changing pattern of presentation among pediatric age group is alarming to us. Shock and plasma leakage has been more prevalent in younger patients in recent outbreak. The study's objective was to compare the clinical, biochemical features, and outcomes of dengue fever and dengue hemorrhagic fever among children. **Objective:** The study's objective was to compare the clinical, biochemical features, and outcomes of dengue fever and dengue hemorrhagic fever among children. **Method:** This was a prospective longitudinal study, carried out in the department of Pediatrics in Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Data was collected from previous record. Total 350 confirmed dengue patient, with the age limit of 1 month to 12 years, admitted in Dhaka Medical College Hospital within January to December 2022, fulfilling the inclusion and exclusion criteria were included in this study. **Results:** In our study among 350 dengue infected child, we found 133 (38%) patients as dengue fever and 217 (62%) patient got dengue hemorrhagic fever. In our study among 350 patient 322 patients has dengue NS1 antigen test positive. There is no significant variation between DF and DHF. 117 patients have Anti-dengue IgM antibody positive, and 28 patients has Anti-dengue IgG antibody positive. And 152 patients got both Anti-dengue IgM antibody and Anti-dengue IgG antibody positive. That means they got secondary infection. In the hematological findings high hematocrit level, leucopenia, thrombocytopenia is significantly associated with dengue hemorrhagic fever in contrast to dengue fever. Death was found in 2 patients. The two case of death was diagnosed as dengue shock syndrome. Hemorrhage contributes to dengue morbidity and mortality. **Conclusion:** Dengue hemorrhagic fever was found as more to be the leading cause of severity or mortality. Skin rash, vomiting, GIT symptoms were more common in dengue hemorrhagic fever. High hematocrit level, leucopenia, thrombocytopenia is significantly associated with dengue hemorrhagic fever in contrast to dengue fever. So, if we can do proper follow up and investigation from the very beginning of diagnosis, management will be more specific, and mortality can be reduced.

Keywords: Dengue fever, dengue hemorrhagic fever, dengue shock syndrome, childhood dengue infection.

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INTRODUCTION

Dengue fever (DF) is an arthropod-borne viral disease that affects more than 100 million cases

worldwide [1, 11]. The clinical manifestations may present as mild febrile illness (DF) to severe hemorrhagic fever (DHF) and Dengue Shock Syndrome (DSS) [4,16]. Dengue fever is associated with fever,

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arthralgia, myalgia, retro-orbital pain, and rash. Dengue cases also present with hemorrhagic manifestation (subconjunctival hemorrhage, petechiae, epistaxis, etc.) with or without shock. Dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) and dengue shock syndrome (DSS) are more serious and can be fatal [18, 23]. The first official outbreak of dengue in Bangladesh was reported in 2000 with 5551 dengue cases and 93 reported deaths [22]. In 2022 a surge of cases started in June. Currently, all eight divisions in the country are reporting cases and deaths. This is the second-largest outbreak since 2000, with the largest having occurred in 2019. The current dengue outbreak is unusual in its scale and seasonality [1]. The prevalence of (DF) in tropical and subtropical zones are increasing day by day. Age distribution has been rising and more cases have been reported among the pediatric age group. DF is usually self-limiting disease where death is uncommon. But the changing pattern of presentation among pediatric age group is alarming to us. A variation in the clinical manifestations can be noted over the decade since the first outbreak [5,6,7,12,14]. For example the outbreak of 2000 and 2002 were characterized by high-grade fever with typical purpuric rash, break-bone body ache, and thrombocytopenia [13,14], on the other hand in 2010 [12]. and 2018 [6]. outbreaks, predominant manifestations were fever, gastrointestinal symptoms and bleeding manifestation with normal platelet counts. The majority of fatalities in dengue infection during epidemics occur in children [43,44]. Previously elder person has been reported to be a risk factor for mortality with DF or DHF as the comorbidities are associated with ageing and their waning immunity [13,19]. Though shock and plasma leakage has been more prevalent in younger patients [1, 20]. This article discusses the impact of dengue fever and dengue hemorrhagic fever in children.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This was a prospective longitudinal study carried out in the department of Pediatrics in Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The study was done after obtaining ethical clearance from the Ethical Review Committee.

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This study was done in department of Pediatrics in Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Dhaka, Bangladesh in the period of June to November 2022. Study population was all the confirmed dengue patient admitted in department of Pediatrics Dhaka Medical College Hospital within this period fulfilling the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion criteria:

Child age from 1 month to 12 years with NS1 antigen positive or Positive dengue IgM antibody with or without positive dengue IgG antibody.

Exclusion criteria:

Both dengue NS1 and IgM negative or only Dengue IgG positive. Expanded dengue syndrome. Dengue fever is associated with chronic disease like - congenital heart disease, chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, malignancy, severe acute malnutrition, epilepsy etc.

According to National guideline for clinical management for dengue syndrome 4th edition, 2018 (revised) dengue fever can be defined as the onset of fever is sudden with a sharp rise in temperature and is frequently associated with a flushed face and headache. Occasionally, chills accompany the sudden rise in temperature. The following features are usually observed: Retro-orbital pain on eye movement or pressure on eye, photophobia, backache and pain in the muscles and joints/bones. The other common symptoms include anorexia and altered taste sensation, constipation, colicky pain and abdominal tenderness. DHF is characterized by the acute onset of high fever and is associated with signs and symptoms similar to DF. Critical phase with plasma leakage is the hallmark of DHF. There is a tendency to develop hypovolemic shock (dengue shock syndrome) due to plasma leakage. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. After fulfilling the inclusion and exclusion criteria informed written consent was taken from parents. Finally total 380 children were enrolled in this study. Children with the age limit of 1 month to 12 years, confirmed dengue case were included in this study irrespective of sex, & ethnicity. Detail history regarding Dengue infection and thorough clinical examinations were done accordingly. Dengue cases were defined and classified according to National guideline for clinical management for dengue syndrome 4th edition, 2018 (revised). Patients were categorized into the following three classes- dengue fever (DF, including classical dengue and dengue with unusual hemorrhage), dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF with or without shock), and expanded dengue syndrome (EDS). Primary infection was defined as having positive IgM antibody and negative IgG antibody or having an IgM:IgG ratio of >1.8 at day 7 after the onset of illness. However, having a negative IgM and positive IgG test or an IgM:IgG ratio of 1.8 was considered secondary infection. (Ref-guideline) After getting proper history and clinical findings appropriate management was given according to the protocol for Dengue management for children. Blood draw was obtained for investigation of complete blood count, S. bilirubin, ALT and AST. Data were processed, compiled and analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0. Data were presented in number, percentage and tables.

RESULTS**Table-I: Demographic profile of study population (N-350)**

Variable	Total N-350	DF N-133 (38%)	DHF (With or without shock) N-217 (62%)	p value
Sex				
Male	165	77(58%)	88 (40%)	0.021
Female	185	56 (42%)	129(59%)	0.035
Residence				
Rural	35	28	7	0.000
Semi urban	140	91	49	0.590
Urban	175	14	161	0.001
Traveling to endemic zone	70	35	35	0.021
Associated co-Infection	82	42	40	0.182

Table-2: Clinical profile of study population (N-350)

Variable	Total N-350	DF N-133 (38%)	DHF (With or without shock) N-217 (62%)	p value
Fever	350 (100 %)	133 (100 %)	217 (100 %)	
Duration of fever (Day)		4.89	5.30	0.072
Headache	153	77	75	0.01
Myaleia	133	56	77	0.215
Retro orbital pain	63	35	28	0.002
MyaJeia	133	56	77	0.215
Letha.II!V	56	35	21	0.01
Arthralgia	70	37	33	0.021
Pallor	72	21	51	0.123
Jaundice	14	7	7	0.345
Skin Rash	168	119	49	0.000
GIT Symptoms				
Vomiting	168	49	119	0.001
Abdominal pain	49	35	14	0.021
Diarrhea	49	7	42	0.123
Ascites	7	0	7	0.345
Hepatomegaly	124	21	103	0.002
Unconsciousness	14	0	14	0.019
Convulsion	16	7	9	0.345
Respiratory symptom	294	133	161	0.002
Urine out				
Normal	231	133	98	0.001
Low	119	0	119	
Pulse <60/min	175	126	49	0.002
Low Pulse volume	189	14	175	0.006
Shock	168	0	168	0.001

Table 3: Hematological profile of stud population (N- 350)

Variable	Total N-350	DF N-133 (38%)	DHF (With or without shock) N-217 (62%)	P value
NS1 antigen Positive	322	126	196	0.140
Anti-dengue IgM antibody Positive	317	119	198	0.507
Anti-dengue IgG antibody Positive	28	7	21	0.140
Hematocrit >48 (raised hematocrio	192	78	184	<0.004
Leucopenia (4 x 10 ³ cells /μL)	266	84	182	<0.001
Thrombocytopenia (150 x 10 ³ cells/μL)	260	50	210	<0.001
ALT	220	80	140	<0.001
AST	273	77	196	<0.001

Table-4: Outcome of the dengue infected children (N-350)

Variable	Total N-350	DF N-133 (38%)	DHF (With or without shock). N-217 (62%)	P value
Complete recovery	341	133	208	0.011
Recovery with complication	7	0	7	0.004
Death	2	0	2	0.005

DISCUSSION

In this study 62% patient presented as DHF. This disease pattern markedly differs from other studies conducted in Bangladesh, where most of the affected children developed DF. Dengue shock syndrome is more common in our study. This may be due to changing pattern of dengue infection in this outbreak or may be Dhaka medical college hospital is a tertiary care hospital and critical patients are referred from different area of Bangladesh.

We noted typical clinical presentations of dengue in our study participants with fever, myalgia (in the form of either backache and diffuse pain), headache, rash, vomiting and shock. Fever is present in all patients. Previous reports from Bangladesh in 2018 [24,25] and from Papua New Guinea in 2016 [26] reported lower frequency of such symptoms. However, a study from Indonesia that included children with dengue between 2009 to 2013 reported a similar prevalence of symptoms [27]. Intriguingly, during the 2000 outbreak in Dhaka city, the pattern of clinical picture was remarkably like our findings [24,25]. A plasma leakage was present in a significantly higher proportion in the DSS group [8]. A significantly higher proportion of children with DHF had hepatomegaly compared to DF fever patients found in another study [29]. Bleeding manifestations including petechiae, epistaxis and menorrhagia have been observed frequently in adults with DF or DHF, although upper gastro-intestinal (GI) bleeding is the most common type of severe haemorrhage [30].

It is well-established that secondary infection by a different virus strain can lead to severe dengue through antibody-dependent enhancement [20]. In 2022 it was the second outbreak of dengue. The 1st largest outbreak of dengue fever was found in 2019. This may be the cause of more chance to develop secondary infection and more chance to develop shock in this pandemic.

In our study among 350 patient 322 patients has dengue NS1 antigen test positive. There is no significant variation between DF and DHF. 117 patients have Anti-dengue IgM antibody Positive, and 28 patients has Anti-dengue IgG antibody Positive. And 152 patients got both Anti-dengue IgM antibody and Anti-dengue IgG antibody Positive. That means they got secondary infection. In the hematological findings high hematocrit level, leucopenia, thrombocytopenia is significantly associated with dengue hemorrhagic fever in contrast to dengue fever. Increased liver enzymes [alanine aminotransferase (ALT) and aspartate aminotransferase

(AST)] have been found in children during dengue infection, indicating liver involvement [31,32].

If we consider the outcome of our study population then we found excellent outcome. Among 350 patients 341 patient recovered without any complication. Only 7 patients got found complication. More unusual manifestations of dengue infection are severe internal hemorrhage, cardiomyopathy, cardiac arrhythmias, acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), rhabdomyolysis, pancreatitis, appendicitis, co-infection with other tropical diseases, and neurological phenomena such as altered consciousness, seizures and coma owing to encephalitis and encephalopathy [33]. Neurological manifestations secondary to dengue infection were ascribed to non-specific complications such as myelitis, optic neuritis, polyradiculopathy or neuropathy [37, 38]. Possible causes of dengue encephalopathy include hypotension, cerebral oedema, focal hemorrhage, hyponatremia and fulminant hepatic failure [34,38,40]. However, a recently documented possibility is dengue invasion of the nervous system [40,41]. Death was found in 2 patients. The two case of death was diagnosed as dengue shock syndrome leading to expanded dengue syndrome. Hemorrhage contributes to dengue morbidity and mortality, especially during the severe thrombocytopenia and toxic hemorrhagic stage (3–5 days after illness onset) [30].

CONCLUSION

Dengue hemorrhagic fever was found as more to be the leading cause of severity or mortality. Skin rash, vomiting, GIT symptoms were more common in dengue hemorrhagic fever. High hematocrit level, leucopenia, thrombocytopenia is significantly associated with dengue hemorrhagic fever in contrast to dengue fever. So, if we can do proper follow up and investigation from the very beginning of diagnosis, management will be more specific, and mortality can be reduced.

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