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Toxoplasmosis: A common zoonotic parasitic infection responsible for repeated abortions in women

Abstract:

Toxoplasmosis is one of the most successful parasitic infections, caused by the intracellular parasite *Toxoplasma gondii*. Woman acquiring Toxoplasmosis for the first time during her pregnancy, the disease develops severe parasitemia in mother and life threatening infection to fetus or abortion. Definitive host of *T.gondii* is cat serving as an important tool for oocysts transmission among human population. 10-50% of cat's owners develop Toxoplasmosis. Cats are exposed to *gondii* by predation on wildlife or feeding on infected rodents. Once entered the host *T.gondii* travels to felid intestine and starts sexual reproduction. Human get exposed to *Toxoplasma gondii* sporulated oocysts by having an accidental contact with contaminated cat feaces. In infected pregnant women, the ingested sporulated oocysts form tissue oocysts in the endometrium of uterus and develop focal lesions in placenta hence fetus gets infected. Primary maternal infection may cause health-threatening sequelae for the fetus, or even cause death in uterus. Clinically, the disease is manifested by high fever, swollen lymph nodes in neck particularly, headache, muscle aches, abortion, still birth and mental retardation of congenitally infected children. Laboratory diagnosis, i.e. PCR and serologic assays, plays the main role in the diagnosis of congenital infection. Treatment usually involves the course of an antibiotic called clindamycin either alone or in combination with corticosteroids. Treatment should ideally be started immediately after the diagnosis and continually for several days after signs have disappeared. In view of the devastating health hazards of Toxoplasmosis, the implementation of effective means for the prevention, diagnosis, and management of this disease should be carried out. A veterinarian should educate the cat owners about importance of in time vaccination of their pets, keeping them indoors and maintaining their health hygiene.

Biography

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