INTRODUCTION

Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP) is a condition characterized by immune-mediated destruction of platelets. ITP is primarily an idiopathic condition but can be triggered by a variety of causes, including medications, infections, or autoimmune disorders. These triggers lead to the creation of antibodies toward platelets which subsequently allows the immune system to destroy them.

CASE PRESENTATION

A 48-year-old man presented to the hospital after noticing bleeding in the mouth, epistaxis, and petechiae on his legs and upper arms. The patient had recently started taking a herbal supplement containing Sarsparilla root, Sassafras root and Fenugreek seeds. Physical exam showed wet purpura and bilateral petechial rash.

CASE PRESENTATION CONTD.

Blood smears showed normal RBCs and WBCs with decreased platelets but without evidence of clumping in the legs. The initial laboratory result was notable for a platelet count of less than 1000/microliter.

The patient was admitted and started on a 4-day course of Dexamethasone. On the second day of admission, the platelet count was still 1000/microliter but the patient had no further oral bleeding. The patient received Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIG) and it was well tolerated. On subsequent day, his platelets increased to 4000, and another dose of IVIG was given. By the fourth day of hospitalization, his platelet count was up to 12,000 and he was discharged on a short steroid taper with advice to follow up outpatient with Hematology. On the day of discharge, the patient felt well with full resolution of the oral blisters.

DISCUSSION

Herbal supplements contain many phytochemicals some of which can have serious effects. They are usually consumed for benefits like weight loss, but have been rarely reported to cause Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura. Our patient took a supplement that contained Sarsparilla root, Sassafras root and Fenugreek seeds which have not been previously reported as a trigger for ITP. This case highlights the risk of developing ITP with herbal supplements. These effects need to be brought to public attention, to make them aware of the risks associated with taking seemingly

REFERENCES