

COVID-19 vaccine Gamaleya National Research Center of Epidermiology and Microbiology

S

Bell's palsy: 2 case reports

A 27-year-old woman and 58-year-old man developed bell's palsy following vaccination with COVID-19 vaccine Gamaleya National Research Center of Epidermiology and Microbiology [dosage and route not stated].

Patient 1 (27-year-old woman): The non-pregnant woman received her first dose of COVID-19 vaccine Gamaleya National Research Center of Epidermiology and Microbiology [Russian Sputnik V, Gam-COVID-Vac]. Thereafter, following first 2 days of vaccination, she had a pain in the injection site, which was followed by weakness, fatigue and low-grade fever. On the 3rd day of vaccination, left side of her tongue had become numb, but taste sensation was found to be intact. After 5 days, she was not able to close her left eye completely, and also her left side of her upper lip shifted to the right side while laughing, speaking or chewing was noted in her. A day later of this observation, same was experienced to her lower lip as well, and she was unable to drink with a straw. And 3 hours later, she experienced a severe sharp pain along sternocleidomastoid muscle with an ipsilateral radiation to ear, retromaxillary and mastoid region. After 12 hours, on examination by a neurologist, on neurological and physical examinations, a hemiparalysis of the facial nerve was noted. Her cerebellar examination was found to be normal. No signs of cutaneous herpes zoster infection was noted. Her vital signs were found to be within normal range and she was afebrile. She had no COVID-19 infection and did not take any medications. Her brain MRI was normal. Bell's palsy was diagnosed, based on the clinical findings. The woman's treatment was started with prednisolone and valaciclovir [Virabex; valacyclovir]. After 10 days of treatment, systemic symptoms and facial immobility was resolved. However, she had been still experiencing a mild pulsating pain in the sternocleidomastoid region.

Patient 2 (58-year-old man): The man, who had controlled diabetes mellitus, presented to the clinic due to left facial sudden weakness and difficulty in closing in his left eye 10 days after receiving her first dose of COVID-19 vaccine Gamaleya National Research Center of Epidermiology and Microbiology [Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine]. Following 3 days of vaccination, he suffered from myalgia, pain in the injection site and hyperthermia. After 6 days, he developed left-sided facial muscle weakness. He also reported a tingling sensation on the lips and tongue. One day after this observation, he complained of the left-sided mouth droop, decreased taste sensation, tearing, fully close left eye, drooling, slurring of speech, move the left eyebrow, smile and inability to chew correctly. After 9 days of vaccination, on visiting to outpatient clinic, physical examination was performed by a neurologist, which revealed paresis of his left facial muscles and inability to close his left eye completely. No other neurologic deficits was noted in him. His vital signs were found to be within normal range. He had no history of skin rashes, preceding infection and trauma. Based on the findings, Bell's palsy was clinically diagnosed. The man's treatment was started with valaciclovir [valacyclovir] and prednisolone. Upon follow-up in 1 week, a partial improvement was noted in him. Further investigations was made, which revealed that he had not developed any new signs and symptoms and also full recovery was noted.