Correspondence

Post varicella zoster virus myelitis in immunocompetent patients

To the Editor

I read with interest, the recent study on post varicella zoster virus myelitis by Ben-Amor et al.[1] Varicella is a highly communicable disease, particularly among children. After primary infection, the virus becomes latent in the cerebral or posterior root ganglia. Some of these individuals develop shingles after several decades because of virus reactivation. It is caused by the decline of cellular immune response. Circumstances such as old age, hard work, using of steroids, or malignancies contribute to the appearance of shingles. Reactivation might also occur in immunocompetent persons.[2] Though I have no knowledge on the exact prevalence of varicella in Tunisia, I presume that it is a substantial health problem. The varicella vaccine, administered at 12-18 months of age, has been proved worldwide to be safe, and could substantially protect against that disease.[3] I wonder whether the varicella vaccine has been implemented in the national immunization program in Tunisia. The interesting 2 case reports addressed by Ben-Amor et al[1] definitely stresses that issue not only to cut short the evolution of varicella cases, but to prevent the long term complications of this disease, particularly post varicella zoster virus myelitis.

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Reply from the Author

No reply was received from the author.

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