23.8.1.5 MYXOEDEMA COMA

E03.5/E03.9

DESCRIPTION

Myxoedema coma is an uncommon condition characterized by severe hypothyroidism which may present with an altered mental status, lethargy, hypothermia, decreased organ function, and other non-specific features associated with hypothyroidism. Myxoedema coma is a life-threatening condition with a high mortality rate of up to 30%; rapid recognition is critical to avoid end-organ damage. Despite the name, coma is an uncommon presentation and is not necessary to make the diagnosis, however, its presence is a poor prognostic indicator.

LoE:IVb[xlvii]

GENERAL MEASURES

» Treat precipitant factor.
» Provide organ support, as needed.
» Use passive rewarming measures.
» Manage hypoglycaemia and hyponatraemia.
» Be cautious of upper airway compromise due to macroglossia and/or supraglottic myxoedema.

LoE:IVb[xlviii]

MEDICINE TREATMENT

- Hydrocortisone, IV, 100 mg 8 hourly.

Thyroid hormone replacement

- Levothyroxine (T4), oral.
  - Loading dose: 200 mcg as a single dose.

- Maintenance dose: 100 mcg, daily.
- Medication can be administered via NG tube if an IV formulation is unavailable.

LoE:IVb[xlix]