

Management of Infective Encephalitis

Suspected Encephalitis

- Look for symptoms and signs suggestive of encephalitis
 - ABCDE approach
- If unwell child - Refer to SORT or involve ICU

Discuss with consultant/ registrar

Investigations & Treatment

- Blood – FBC, U&E, LFT, Bone profile, CRP, Clotting, Blood PCR, Glucose, Blood gas, Lactate, Blood culture. Consider paired oligoclonal bands.
- Needs to consider lumbar puncture (LP) and imaging – see contraindications

Clinical contraindications to LP

NO

YES

Perform LP

Measure opening pressure, CSF for MC&S, virology (PCRs), protein, glucose, lactate, save CSF and consider oligoclonal bands

CSF findings suggestive of encephalitis

YES

Start IV aciclovir

Neuroimaging if not performed – preferably MRI 24-48 hrs

HSV/VZV encephalitis confirmed

Immunosuppressed or age 3 mths to 12 yrs

NO

YES

14 days of IV aciclovir

21 days of IV aciclovir

Repeat LP – PCR positive

NO

YES

Stop aciclovir

7 days of IV aciclovir

Urgent CT

- Radiological contraindications to LP
- Review suitability for LP every 24 hours

*NO

YES



DECISION on LP

Decide safety on LP on case by case basis – requires consultant decision

Alternative diagnosis made or no infective agent identified

Consider involving UHS neurology and/or infectious diseases teams to discuss stopping aciclovir

Contraindications to LP (Raised ICP)
Moderate to severe impairment of consciousness (GCS <13 or fall in GCS of >2)
Focal neurological signs (inc unequal, dilated or poorly responsive pupils)
Abnormal posture or posturing
Papilloedema
Seizures
Relative bradycardia with hypertension
Abnormal 'doll's eye' movements

Other contraindications to LP
Systemic shock
<u>Haematological abnormalities</u> Abnormal coagulation screen Platelet < 100 X 10 ⁹ /L Anti coagulant therapy
Local infection at LP site
Respiratory insufficiency
Suspected meningococcal septicaemia (spreading or extensive purpura)
Immunocompromised

Radiological contraindications to LP
Significant brain shift/ swelling
Tight basal cisterns
Alternative diagnosis made