From Skin Infection to Pericardectomy: A Cautionary Tale of Undertreated MRSA

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Background: Pernyomyocarditis is characterized by inflammation of the pericardium and myocardium commonly associated with viruses. Intraoperatively, a purulent pernyomyocarditis can be associated with bacterial infections, a condition associated with much higher mortality.

Case: A 48 year old male Naval officer with no significant prior medical history was deployed in Bahrain and presented to local providers with malaise, fever, and a right elbow rash. He was diagnosed with a right elbow abscess and managed accordingly.

His clinical course is described in Figure 1.

Perimyocarditis differs from pericarditis in that the myocardium is involved significantly, which can be evidenced by functional changes as seen in the case described.

Only 5 cases of purulent pericarditis caused by CA-MRSA have been reported in literature. Of those:

- Only 2 cases reported predisposing conditions (skin infections). Both cases reported significant ventricular function impairment compared to other cases.
- Inadequate treatment of CA-MRSA soft tissue infections can predispose to developing purulent pericarditis. Our patient was also given immunosuppression with steroids in the setting of a known bacterial infection.

References: