Case study

New combined drug regimen for complete cure of pulmonary Tuberculosis in patient with impaired hepatocellular functioning – a case report

ABSTRACT

The research gives new therapeutic regimen to Tuberculosis. Despite of the fact being that the current regimen is a burden on liver functioning; most of these are highly hepatotoxic and increases serum alanine aminotransferase (ALT) manifolds.In the backdrop of such a condition this clinical study has been done. Here 4 drugs were selected and TB infection of a middle aged female patient was cured rapidly in one month who had hepatocellular changes. The regimen in this research has also showed significant improvement of liver functions post-therapy. This is about the *"Mumbai Protocol"* of tuberculosis management.

KEYWORDS

Tuberculosis, Mycobacterium Tuberculosis, Internal Medicine, Infection therapy

INTRODUCTION

With improvement in medical infrastructure and advent of new drugs in therapeutics, we have been able to win over many epidemics and endemics as well. But few infectious diseases like tuberculosis, caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* are still a burden over the health of world population.Almost about 23% of the world population is affected by tuberculosis. Tuberculosis may be localized in different organs of the body, be it the neural meninges or genitalia.

But the primary site of infection is the lungs. Currently the recommended drug regimen used to treat Tuberculosis or TB is an intensive therapy with isoniazid, rifampin, pyrazanamide and ethambutol for 2 months and a prolonged phase therapy for 4 months with isoniazid and rifampin(Payam Nahid et al, 2016, p.853-867).The Centers for disease control and prevention (CDC) immensely advocates the same. But it is to be noted here that apart from ethambutol, all the other three drugs used in this regimeni.e.isoniazid, rifampin and pyrazinamide are highly hepatotoxic (Bethesda,2020).Hence, management of patients with impaired liver function becomes almost next to impossible for clinician by using the current drug regimen. Utilizing the same regimen is such condition blindly may lead to severe complications like drug induced fatty liver, liver cirrhosis and fulminant hepatic failure even. This research deals with utilization of a new regimen of combination drugs for successful permanent remission of tuberculosis without causing any harm to liver functioning. The regimen has been proven out to be a huge success as the TB was remitted after first month of therapy only, however the 4+2 months regimen was continued to prevent recurrence. The clinicians involved in this finding are in high hopes that this regimenmight be used successfully used to cure tuberculosis in patients with liver pathologies.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A controlled instrumental observation and administration of the drugs were done in home set-up. Although no necessity for hospitalization was felt, all essential monitoring of the patient was done on a routine basis daily.

CASE REPORT

The experimental therapy and studywas conducted with complete agreement of the patient, safeguarding her physical, psychological and emotional well-being.

PATIENT INFORMATION

This is taken in two parts – Anamnesis vitae and anamnesis morbi

ANAMNESIS VITAE

This includes general information past medical history, family history and lifestyle of the patient.

General Information

The patient is a 40 years old female, Indian by nationality. The patient was born on 27th March, 1982 in Kolkata, West Bengal, India. Post-partum conditions have been reported to have been normal. There was normal reflex, appearance, cardiac, pulmonary and neurological status; nether there was neither jaundice nor any infection;APGAR – 5/5.She married from the age of 33 years, with normal psychological and sexual functioning but the patient is nulliparous.She works as a professor in a private sector Indian university in Mumbai. No history of drug abuse has been recorded and consumption of alcohol and smoking of cigarette has been denied. The patient has a normal BMI of 21 and no symptoms of metabolic syndrome. In childhood few episodes of acute liver changes have been reported, although it was treated at home family members and hence exact diagnosis is not available.

Past Medical History

The patient has no chronic systemic disorder. No massive life threateningincidence at past has been reported as well. Menarche was at normal age range of 12-13 years (not remembered exactly). Psychiatric well being has been noted as satisfactory. She had an academically sound career and currently is a successful scholar. At the age of 26 years stress induced gastritis was diagnosed which subsequently subsided with proper sleep and use of pantoprazole 40mg and drotaverine 40mg for a small period of time. Recently she was treated for moderate infection COVID19 and salmutarol inhaler was started on diagnosis of asthma.

Family history

The patient's father, mother and younger brother are of Indian nationality and origin. Her father was diagnosed with papillary carcinoma of the thyroid gland and a complete thyroidectomy was performed. Post operation, voice of her father has crackled and toned down due to possible injury to recurrent laryngeal

nerve.He is also a patient of diabetes mellitus type 2 and arterial hypertension stage 1. The patient's mother has no clinical condition as such, apart from diabetes mellitus type 2 and arterial hypertension stage 1. The patient's younger brother is a patient of mild Schizophrenia and is on selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor drugs.

ANAMNESIS MORBI

It includes, present condition, complaints, general observation, systemic observation and clinical observation of the patient.

Primary Complaint

Her main complaint was that of dyspnea, fatigue, persistent cough, loss of appetite and night sweat.She said that breathlessness increases at night and when she climbs stairs or does any physical activity as such.

General Observation

The patient was suffering from breathlessness, there was immense fatigue and the skin was pale. All neurological symptoms like ShchetkinBlumberg signwas negative. No tremor was noticed. Pulse was counted 77 beats/min. There was persistent coughing of non-productive type.

Cardiac System

Borders of heart on percussion were found to be in normal position. The left apex impulse was heard atnormal position. The heart sounds were normal on auscultation. The pulse was 77 beats/min.

Respiratory system

Breathing was exacerbated. Thoracic breathing with paroxysm was noticed. Deflections of right and left scapula wereequal. On auscultation, wheezing and crackling sounds were heard prominently.

Digestive system

Normal position of stomach in the left hypochondrium, diaphragm was situated without any changes. Slightly increased size of liver was felt on palpation of right hypochondrium and it was slightly painful to palpate as well. Couvier's sign was negative. No pain was felt on palpation along the intestine. Bowel sounds were normal on auscultation.

Urinary system

She urinates up to 6 to 7 times daily. There is no pain in kidney on palpation.

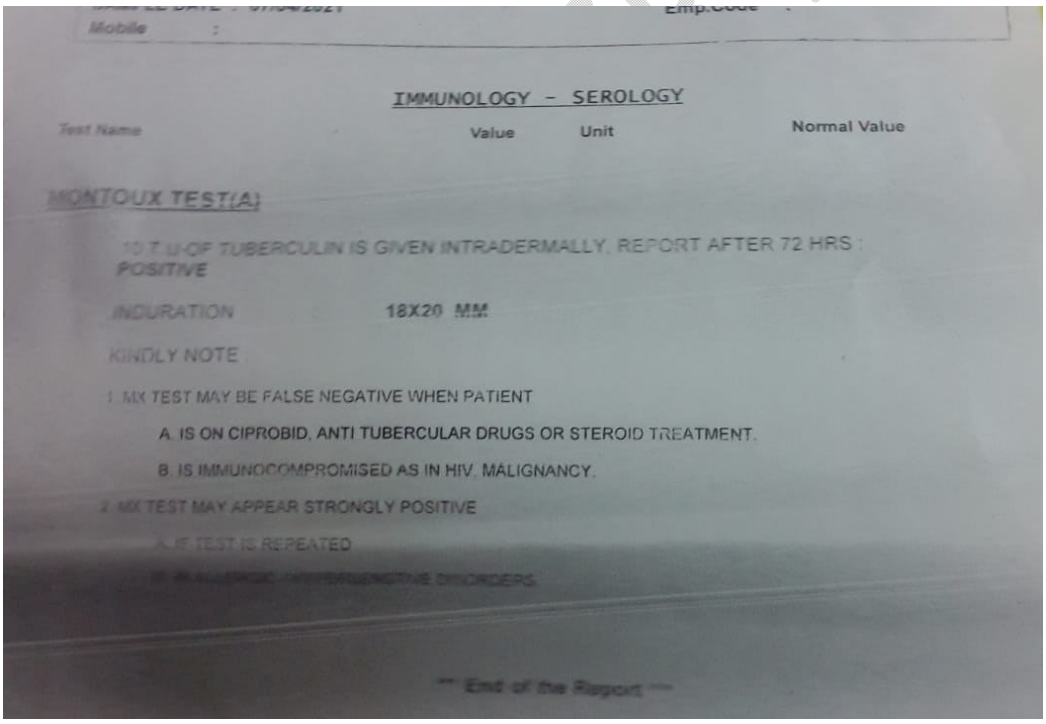
Nervous system

Neurological condition is satisfactory. No neurological symptoms were noted. No change in perception of colour or smell was noted. Psychologically the patient was healthy. No cognitive impairment was reported.

INITIAL DIAGNOSTICS AND ASSESSMENT

Based on the symptoms and previously diagnosed asthma, pulmonary tuberculosis was suspected with histopathological changes of the hepatocytes. Hence a Mantoux test and IGRA were done to assess presence of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and a liver function test was carried out to assess the functionality of liver.

The result of Mantoux test is hereby attached below, showing positive tuberculin.



Mobile :

IMMUNOLOGY - SEROLOGY

Test Name	Value	Unit	Normal Value

MONTOUX TEST(A)

10 T.U OF TUBERCULIN IS GIVEN INTRADERMALLY, REPORT AFTER 72 HRS :

POSITIVE

INDURATION 18X20 MM

KINDLY NOTE

1. MX TEST MAY BE FALSE NEGATIVE WHEN PATIENT

A. IS ON CIPROBID, ANTI TUBERCULAR DRUGS OR STEROID TREATMENT.

B. IS IMMUNOCOMPROMISED AS IN HIV, MALIGNANCY.

2. MX TEST MAY APPEAR STRONGLY POSITIVE

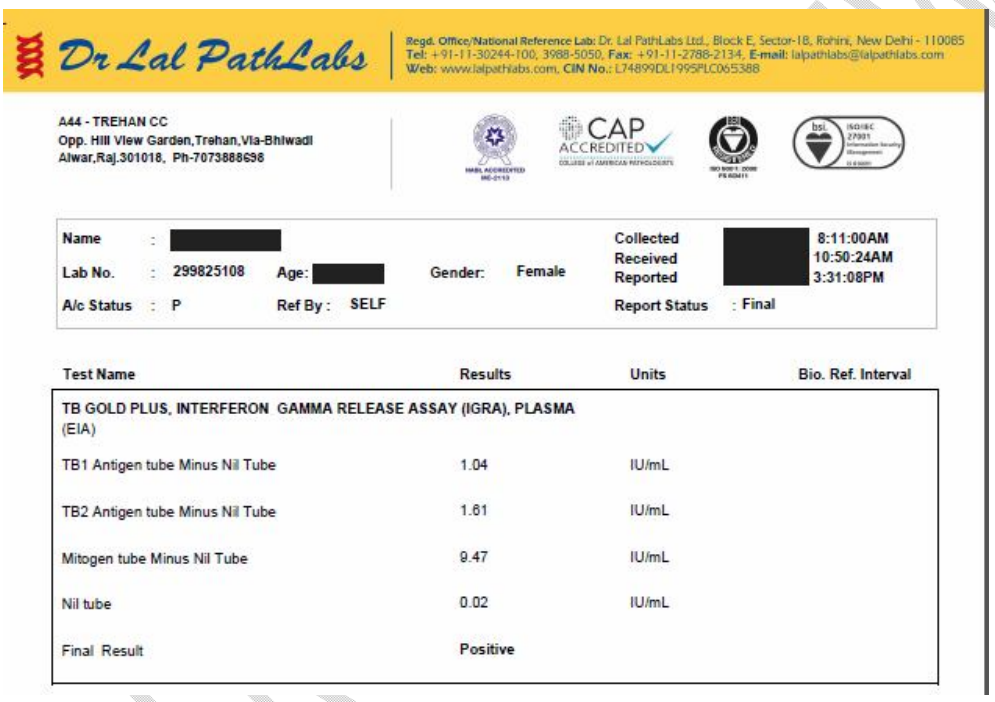
A. IF TEST IS REPEATED

B. IN ALLERGIC HYPERSENSITIVE DISORDERS

*** End of the Report ***

g 1:Imuunology serology report

To confirm the diagnosis and rule out false negative results, an IGRA or interferon gamma releasing assay was performed. The result of IGRA also showed positivefor TB antigens. The result has been attached below.



Dr Lal PathLabs

Regd. Office/National Reference Lab: Dr. Lal PathLabs Ltd., Block E, Sector-18, Rohini, New Delhi - 110085
Tel: +91-11-30244-100, 3988-5050, Fax: +91-11-2788-2134, E-mail: lalpathlabs@lalpathlabs.com
Web: www.lalpathlabs.com, CIN No.: L74899DL1995PLC065388

A44 - TREHAN CC
Opp. Hill View Garden,Trehan,Via-Bhiwadi
Alwar,Raj.301018, Ph-7073888698

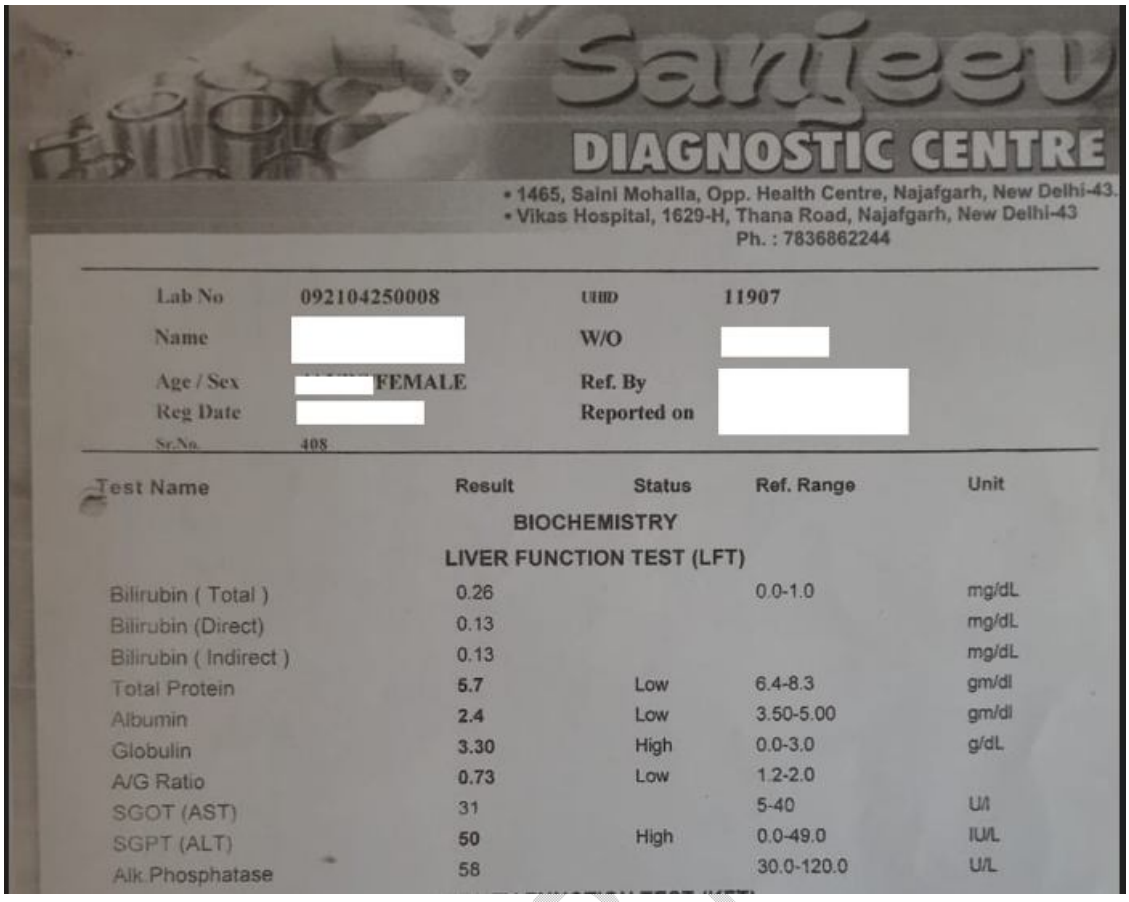
CAP ACCREDITED

Name	: [redacted]			Collected	[redacted] 8:11:00AM
Lab No.	: 299825108	Age: [redacted]	Gender: Female	Received	10:50:24AM
A/c Status	: P	Ref By : SELF		Reported	3:31:08PM
				Report Status	: Final

Test Name	Results	Units	Bio. Ref. Interval
TB GOLD PLUS, INTERFERON GAMMA RELEASE ASSAY (IGRA), PLASMA (EIA)			
TB1 Antigen tube Minus Nil Tube	1.04	IU/mL	
TB2 Antigen tube Minus Nil Tube	1.61	IU/mL	
Mitogen tube Minus Nil Tube	9.47	IU/mL	
Nil tube	0.02	IU/mL	
Final Result	Positive		

Fig 2: Pathological test report

To assess the extent of hepato-cellular functions a liver function test was done too. Since, on palpation, right hypochondrium was painful. The test results showed increased ALT and globulin with decreased total protein and albumin. The findings were suggestive of suspected mild grade non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).



Sanjeev
DIAGNOSTIC CENTRE
• 1465, Saini Mohalla, Opp. Health Centre, Najafgarh, New Delhi-43.
• Vikas Hospital, 1629-H, Thana Road, Najafgarh, New Delhi-43
Ph. : 7836862244

Lab No 092104250008 UHID 11907
Name [redacted] W/O [redacted]
Age / Sex [redacted] FEMALE Ref. By [redacted]
Reg Date [redacted] Reported on [redacted]
Sr.No 408

Test Name	Result	Status	Ref. Range	Unit
BIOCHEMISTRY				
LIVER FUNCTION TEST (LFT)				
Bilirubin (Total)	0.26		0.0-1.0	mg/dL
Bilirubin (Direct)	0.13			mg/dL
Bilirubin (Indirect)	0.13			mg/dL
Total Protein	5.7	Low	6.4-8.3	gm/dl
Albumin	2.4	Low	3.50-5.00	gm/dl
Globulin	3.30	High	0.0-3.0	g/dL
A/G Ratio	0.73	Low	1.2-2.0	
SGOT (AST)	31		5-40	U/l
SGPT (ALT)	50	High	0.0-49.0	IU/L
Alk Phosphatase	58		30.0-120.0	U/L

Fig 3: Diagnostic report

From the patient's condition, it was not suitable to use the usual anti-tuberculosis drug regimen comprising of isoniazid, pyrazanamide, rifampin and ethambutol, because of their hepatotoxicity. Hence, an experimental approach was taken and a new regimen was formulated with drugs which have shown to be having somewhat anti-tuberculosis properties.

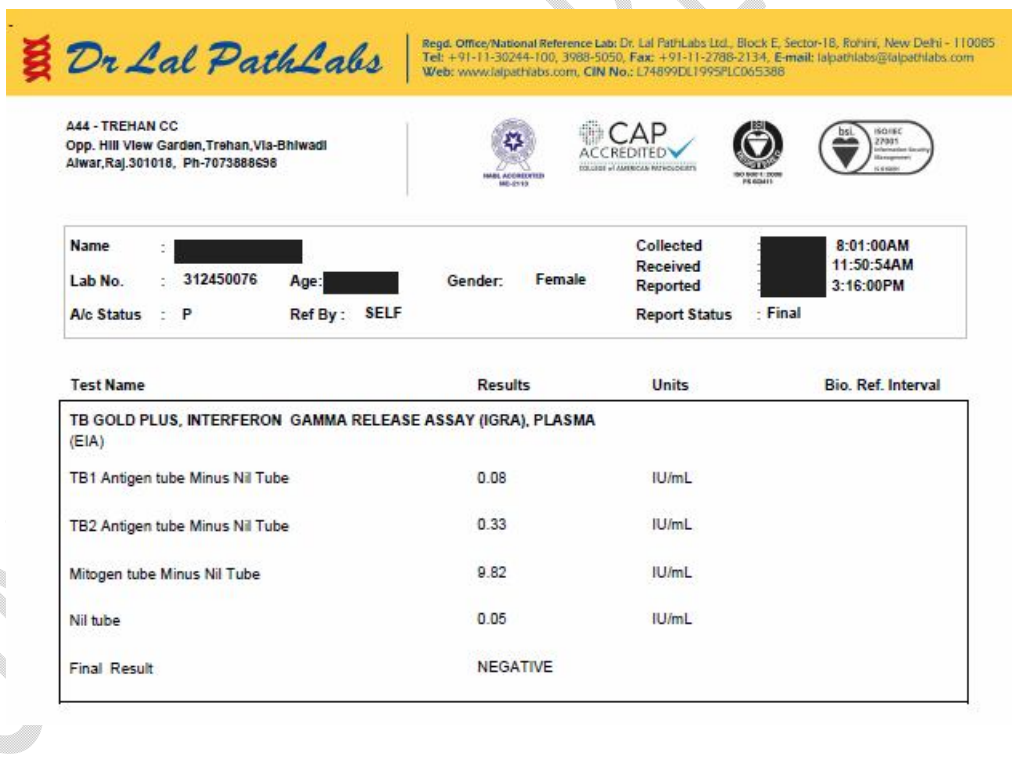
THE EXPERIMENTAL THERAPY

The drugs which were selected are Streptomycin, cycloserine, p-amino salicylic acid and ethambutol. The first 2 monthsregimen of intensive therapy included all the four drugs. Streptomycin 1g intramuscular injection was given twice a week in a gap of three days, cycloserine 500mg PO was given twice daily, p-amino salicylic acid 4g PO was given once daily by sprinkling on slightly acid food diet and ethambutol 400mg PO was given once daily.

In the continuation phase of 4 months, only cycloserine 500mg PO once daily and ethambutol 400mg PO once daily were used.

FOLLOW-UP AND OUTCOME

It is a known fact for clinicians that after 2 weeks of intensive therapy phase, the tuberculosis becomes latent in most of the cases but for test report to be negative, at least the first 2 months of therapy has to be completed. But outrageous surprising that in this study test for IGRA was done after 1 month of intensive therapy phase since symptoms were markedly reduced. An IGRA was conducted and the result showed negative for tuberculosis. The patient was unwilling to conduct another Mantoux test and hence it was avoided, neither was any necessity for it felt from clinicians point of view. The IGRA test report after 1 month of intensive phase therapy has been attached below.



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CAP ACCREDITED

Name : [redacted]
Lab No. : 312450076 Age: [redacted] Gender: Female
A/c Status : P Ref By : SELF

Collected : [redacted] 8:01:00AM
Received : 11:50:54AM
Reported : 3:16:00PM
Report Status : Final

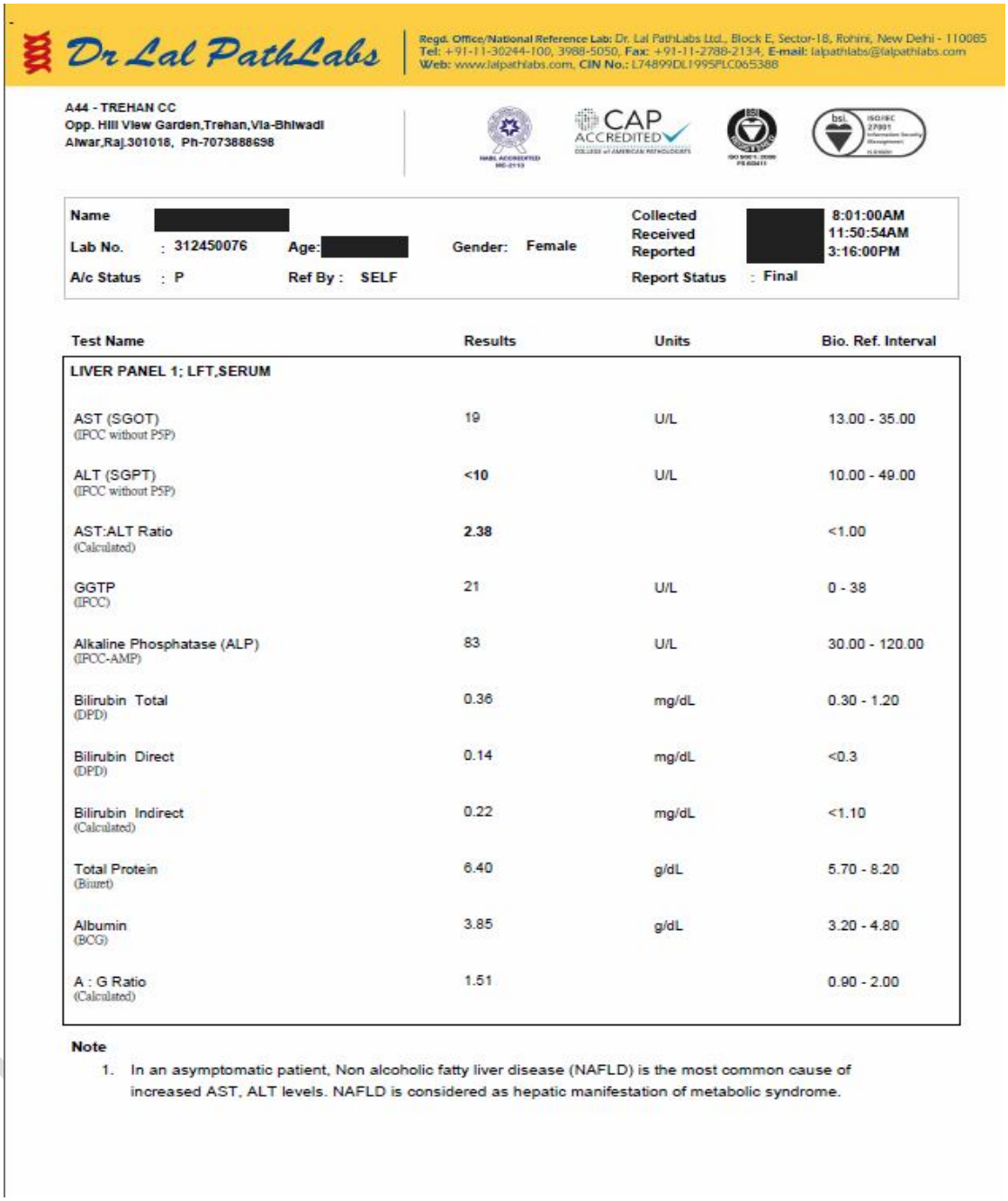
Test Name	Results	Units	Bio. Ref. Interval
TB GOLD PLUS, INTERFERON GAMMA RELEASE ASSAY (IGRA), PLASMA (EIA)			
TB1 Antigen tube Minus Nil Tube	0.08	IU/mL	
TB2 Antigen tube Minus Nil Tube	0.33	IU/mL	
Mitogen tube Minus Nil Tube	9.82	IU/mL	
Nil tube	0.05	IU/mL	
Final Result	NEGATIVE		

Fig 4: The IGRA test report after 1 month of intensive phase therapy

Thus the patient was cured of tuberculosis, no TB antigen were present anymore.

To assess the liver condition post-therapy, a liver function test was conducted again. The LFT test report was highly satisfactory. All parameters were normal;

ALT which was increased in earlier report is now slightly decreased along with rationally slightly increased ALT/AST ratio. The result of LFT has been attached below thus.



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A/c Status	: P	Ref By : SELF		Report Status	: Final

Test Name	Results	Units	Bio. Ref. Interval
LIVER PANEL 1; LFT,SERUM			
AST (SGOT) (IFCC without P5P)	19	U/L	13.00 - 35.00
ALT (SGPT) (IFCC without P5P)	<10	U/L	10.00 - 49.00
AST:ALT Ratio (Calculated)	2.38		<1.00
GGTP (IFCC)	21	U/L	0 - 38
Alkaline Phosphatase (ALP) (IFCC-AMP)	83	U/L	30.00 - 120.00
Bilirubin Total (DPD)	0.36	mg/dL	0.30 - 1.20
Bilirubin Direct (DPD)	0.14	mg/dL	<0.3
Bilirubin Indirect (Calculated)	0.22	mg/dL	<1.10
Total Protein (Biuret)	6.40	g/dL	5.70 - 8.20
Albumin (BCG)	3.85	g/dL	3.20 - 4.80
A : G Ratio (Calculated)	1.51		0.90 - 2.00

Note

1. In an asymptomatic patient, Non alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) is the most common cause of increased AST, ALT levels. NAFLD is considered as hepatic manifestation of metabolic syndrome.

Fig 5: The result of LFT

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The rationale of the drugs selected was such that the drugs should be efficiently anti-TB and at the same time not hepatotoxic or mildly hepatotoxic. Streptomycin is now being used qui regard (Waters M et al, 2022)et frequently to treat multi-drug resistant tuberculosis It has shown high efficacy in this. But at the same time it is not hepatotoxic. Although, earlier it was doubted to be but recent findings have suggested that no concrete evidence of streptomycin being hepatotoxic could identified (Bethesda, 2021).Likewisecycloserine is also utilized in multi-drug resistant tuberculosis with good efficacy. But no strong evidence of hepatotoxicity could have been identified (Bethesda, 2017). P-amino salicylic acid is now used as a second-line anti-tuberculin drug. But it was frequently and efficaciously used in 1940s. With passing time this drug was replaced by other newer drugs (Zhang et al, 2019, p.825-829).The drug acts as a pro-drug which generates a toxic dehydrofolate analogue when incorporated in folate pathway (Zheng et al, 2013, p. 288).IN this patient, during the therapy no gastric related anomaly was noticed as a side effect. It might be that incorporation of the four drugs has some interaction present between them. The primary cause behind replacing it was gastrointestinal irritation. Thus, it was prescribed only for the first 2 months of intensive therapy and was not prescribed for the 4 month prolonged phase therapy. Finally, ethambutol being a drug of regular choice in treatment of tuberculosis has never shown hepatotoxic property. Another reason for adding ethambutol to the regimen is to prevent multi-drug resistance (KD Tripathi, 2018, p. 819-820).Thus the candidate was selected for the 4 month prolonged phase therapy as well.

CONCLUSION

Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the causative agent of tuberculosis is still a health issue with which strands livelihood of people all around the world. Countries on national level and doctors, nurses and other health worker in ground level have worked hard against this. With emerging multi-resistance against *M.tuberculosis*bacteria, it is immensely important that drug combinations other than the usual regimen are tried. Successful treatment of patients with changed liver function becomes almost impossible with the current regimen as all the drugs in it apart from ethambutol become contraindicated. The authors would like to be named this regimen in memory of the patient as the *"Mumbai protocol"*.Thus, this study is quiet an appreciable breakthrough in clinical science of combination therapy.

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