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Unmasking *Bartonella henselae*: A forgotten cause of hepatosplenic and marrow involvement

By [Zainulabid, UA](#) (Zainulabid, U. A.) ^[1] ; [Cheong, X](#) (Cheong, X. K.) ^[2] ; [Kori, N](#) (Kori, N.) ^[2] ; [Kueh, JWT](#) (Kueh, J. W. T.) ^[3] ; [Rose, IM](#) (Rose, I. Mohamed) ^[3] ; [Ramli, R](#) (Ramli, R.) ^[4] ; [Muien, MZA](#) (Muien, M. Z. Abdul) ^[2] , ^[5] ; [Periyasamy, P](#) (Periyasamy, P.) ^[2] ; [Ramli, SR](#) (Ramli, S. R.) ^[6]

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Abstract

Bartonella henselae is an uncommon but important cause of prolonged pyrexia of unknown origin (PUO) and hepatosplenomegaly. Conventional diagnostic tools often fail in disseminated disease, leading to delayed or missed diagnoses. We report a 60-year-old man with PUO, progressive weight loss, and hepatosplenomegaly. Clinical suspicion, guided by significant cat exposure, led to molecular confirmation of B. henselae infection after conventional workup proved inconclusive. Liver biopsy revealed pleomorphic rod-shaped organisms on Warthin-Starry staining, while real-time PCR targeting the rpoB gene and conventional PCR targeting the gltA gene performed on bone marrow aspirate confirmed disseminated bartonellosis. The patient responded well to prolonged doxycycline and rifampicin therapy, achieving near-complete recovery. This case underscores the importance of clinical vigilance, histological clues, and molecular diagnostics in identifying rare but treatable infections.

Keywords

Author Keywords: [Bartonellahenselae](#); [cats](#); [bacillary peliosis](#); [hepatosplenomegaly](#); [pyrexia of unknown origin](#)

Author Information

Corresponding Address: Cheong, X. K. (corresponding author)

▼ Univ Kebangsaan Malaysia, Fac Med, Dept Med, Cheras 56000, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

E-mail Addresses : cheongxk@gmail.com

Addresses :

▼ ¹ Int Islamic Univ Malaysia, Dept Internal Med, Kulliyah Med, Kuantan 25200, Pahang, Malaysia

▼ ² Univ Kebangsaan Malaysia, Fac Med, Dept Med, Cheras 56000, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

³ Hosp Canselor Tuanku Muhriz, Dept Lab Diagnost Serv, Histopathol Unit, Cheras 56000, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

▼ ⁴ Univ Kebangsaan Malaysia, Hosp Canselor Tuanku Muhriz, Dept Lab Diagnost Serv, Bacteriol Unit, Cheras 56000, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

▼ ⁵ Univ Malaysia Sabah, Fac Med & Hlth Sci, Dept Radiol, Kota Kinabalu 88400, Sabah, Malaysia

[...more addresses](#)

E-mail Addresses :