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Intrinsically Contaminated Intravenous Product

Gina Pugliese, RN, MS;
Martin S. Favero, PhD
Medical News Editors

Investigators in Madrid, Spain, have reported a common-source outbreak of *Burkholderia pickettii* among 46 patients in three hospitals. Among the 46 culture-positive cases, there were 48 infections (44 bacteremias and 2 intravenous catheter-associated infections without bacteremia). *B pickettii* was isolated from six parenteral nutrition samples that contained ranitidine (BBL; Alonga, Madrid, Spain). Vials of ranitidine were collected for culture, and *B pickettii* was isolated from vials in a specific lot at one hospital. Thirty-three isolates were analyzed and shown to be of the same biotype, one that is associated with low virulence, which may explain why there were no deaths.

B pickettii has been associated with outbreaks of nosocomial infection (bacteremia or colonization of the respiratory tract) due to contamination of intravenously administered products, "sterile" distilled water, chlorhexidine in water, respiratory therapy solutions, and intravenous catheters. Although this outbreak involved a greater number of cases than did any previously described outbreak, the findings were consistent with other reported outbreaks.

The authors hypothesized that the product may have been contaminated during the filter (0.45 and 0.22 micropore) sterilization process during production. The organism is known to be able to pass through membrane filters and has the capability of growing in water-based solutions. No new cases occurred once the product stopped being dispensed.

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