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[*Streptococcus bovis* endocarditis. Clinical and microbiological observations and review of the literature].

[Article in Italian]

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Fourteen patients (11 men and 3 women) with *Streptococcus bovis* infective endocarditis have been observed by the Infectious Disease Section of our Department of Clinical Medicine between the years 1988-1998. The mean age was 63.2 years (range 35-85 years); 5 patients previously suffered valvular disease or had a valvular prosthesis, the infection involved the mitral valve in 6 patients, the aortic in 8, the prosthetic valve in 1. No patient developed cardiac failure or died during hospitalization; only 1 episode of major embolism (spleen) was observed. No patient required cardiac surgery. All patients became afebrile after starting antibiotic treatment; no cases of *Streptococcus bovis* relapse have been observed, during a six-month follow-up after antibiotics discontinuation, in 13 patients fully evaluated. The remaining patient was lost to follow-up. An underlying asymptomatic colonic neoplasm was diagnosed at colonoscopy in 7 of 11 evaluated patients. This study confirms that *Streptococcus bovis* infective endocarditis is relatively benign, but it stresses the frequency and potential severity of the associated colonic lesions, requiring colonoscopy and making the treatment of high risk lesion mandatory.

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