

Transient Ischemic attack as an onset form of Chronic Chagas Disease

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CLINICAL CASE

At the beginning of 2021, a 50-year-old woman without a relevant medical history was admitted in the neurology ward of the hospital with a left hemiparesis and difficulty speaking that resolves in less than 24h. The CT and the RM don't show any ischemic signs. ECG, blood test and carotid ultrasound are performed without showing any alteration. It was finally diagnosed as a Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA) of unknown etiology.

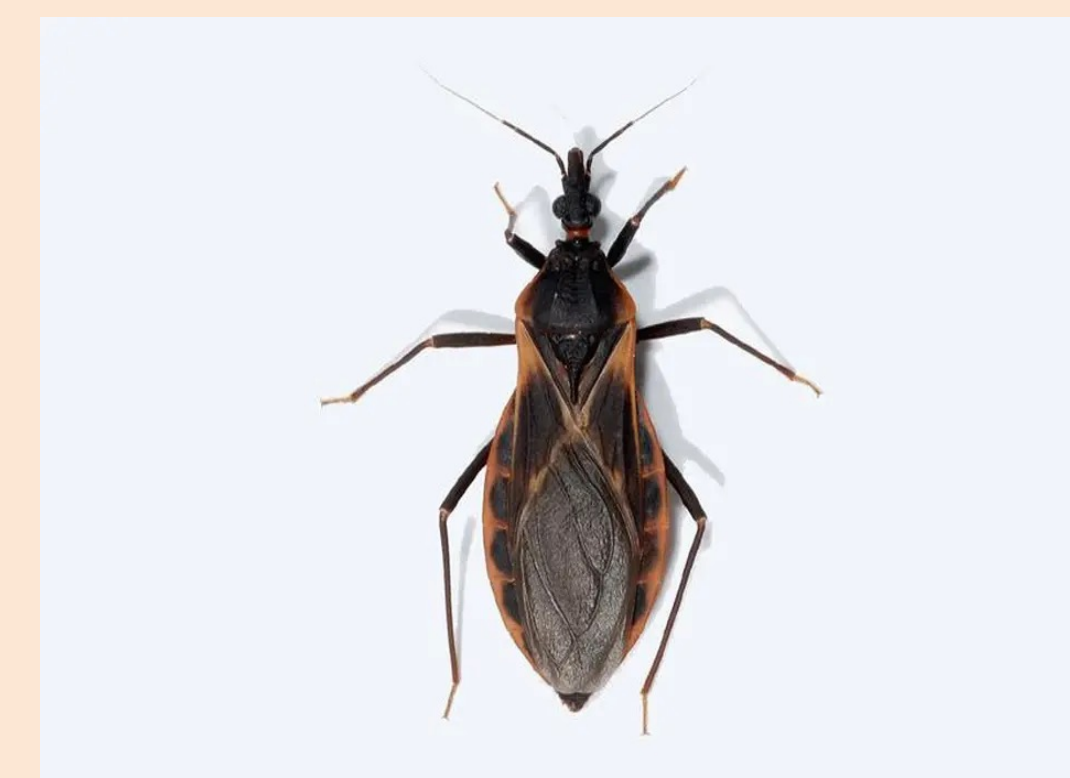
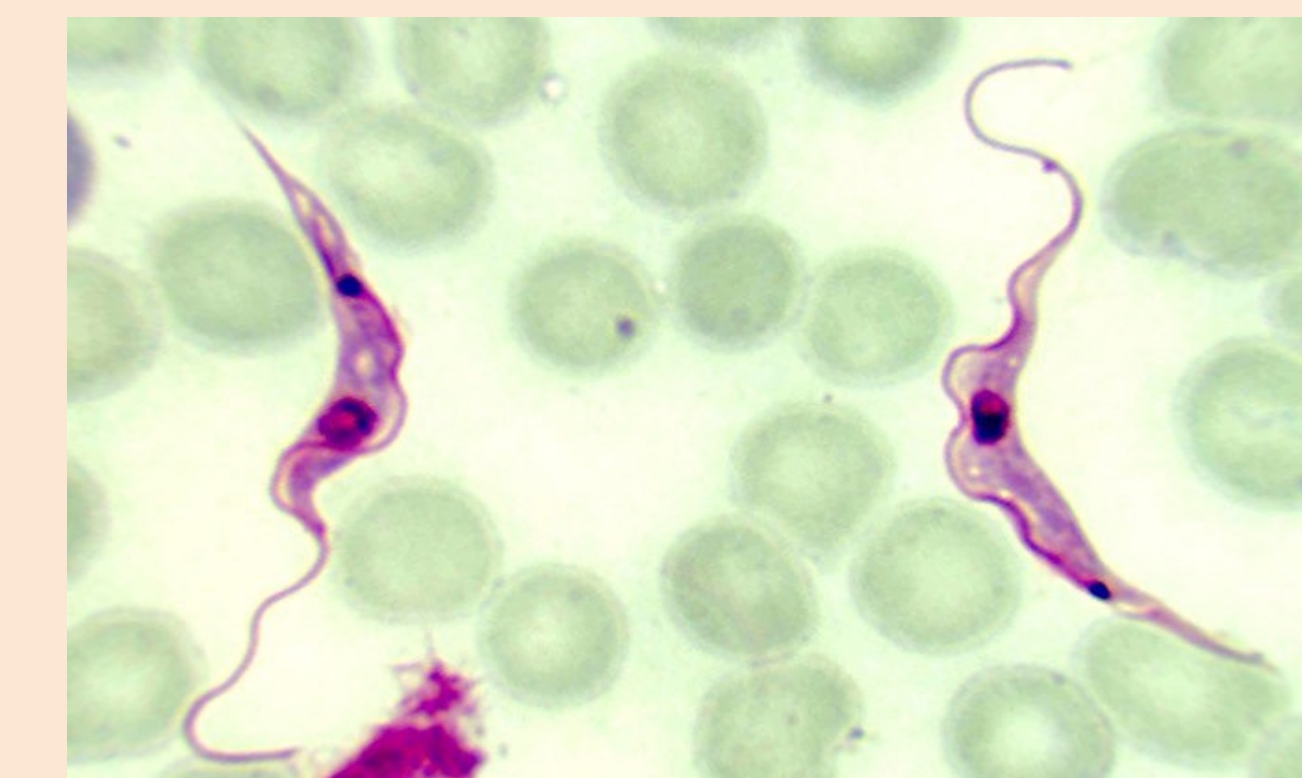
The patient was born in Cochabamba, Bolivia, but she has been living in Spain for 20 years. This fact made us think a *Trypanosoma cruzi* serology that was positive, been diagnosed therefore with Chagas disease. This could be related with the TIA suffered by the patient, as stroke has been described to be an uncommon onset form of Chronic Chagas disease



BACKGROUND

Chagas disease is the 3rd most common parasitic infection, affecting about 6-7 million people around the world, mostly in Latin America. It's caused by a protozoo called *Trypanosoma cruzi* and transmitted through a biting bug called *Triatoma infestans*, commonly known as Vinchuca in many latin countries, although there's also the possibility of vertical transmission and transmission due to solid organ transplantation.

30% of affected people will present chronic manifestations such as cardiac, neurological or digestive disorders. Most of the strokes that occur in patients with Chronic Chagas disease are ischemic and the most frequent cause is a thromboembolism due to a cardiac aneurism, mural thrombus or arrhythmia, but it can occur even without a cardiac disorder.



FUTURE THREATS

Initially, Chagas disease was confined in rural areas of Latin America, but, due to greater mobility of people in last decades, most of infected people have gone to live to urban areas and the disease has spread in many countries of north America and Europe. In Spain it's estimated to affect about 55000people, 70% of them undiagnosed.

The aim of this work is to highlight the possibility of transient ischemic attack or stroke as the first symptom of chronic Chagas disease in people from endemic countries, and to make physicians aware of the importance of checking he disease in people coming from endemic countries.