Progressive weakness with hyperreflexia suggests a broad differential, including autoimmune, endocrine, metabolic, nutritional, toxic, neoplastic, and infectious pathophysiology. Human-T cell Lymphotropic Virus, type 1 (HTLV-1) is a retrovirus that can cause HTLV-1 associated myelopathy (HAM).

HAM is an inflammatory spinal cord disease manifesting with progressive spastic muscle weakness, hyperreflexia, and urinary incontinence. HTLV-1 infection is endemic in the Caribbean but rare worldwide with only 5-10 million cases\(^1\). 1-4% of those infected with HTLV-1 develop HAM in their lifetime.

No treatment has proven benefit in HAM, with most patients becoming wheelchair bound over a median of 21 years\(^2\). We report a case of HAM, initially thought to be a paraneoplastic neuromyotonia.