The Incidence of Secondary Sjogren Syndrome in Relation to Disease Activity & Disease Duration of Rheumatoid Arthritis Patients

Fatma A. Abdulkareem¹, Fawaz D. AL-Aswad², Mohammed H. Alasami³

¹²Baghdad University, College of Dentistry, Baghdad, Iraq
³Baghdad University, College of Medicine, Baghdad, Iraq

Abstract: Background: Secondary sjogren syndrome is a chronic autoimmune disease that associated with connective tissue disorders most commonly Rheumatoid arthritis. Aim of the work: to evaluate the incidence of secondary Sjogren syndrome in relation to disease activity & disease duration of Rheumatoid arthritis. Methods: 61 Rheumatoid arthritis patients of either gender with age range (25- 60) y., of them (31 patients with Secondary sjogren syndrome diagnosed according to American-European Consensus Group criteria (AECC) & 30 Rheumatoid arthritis patients diagnosed clinically by rheumatology specialists) both of them evaluated clinically by DAS28-score & subjected to questionnaire including duration of the disease. Result: a comparison between two studied diseased groups using ROC curve, showed highly significant differences at p =0.018 regardind disease duration, and secondary sjogren group revealed long duration than Rheumatoid arthritis group, while no relation could be found between DAS28 & occurrence of secondary Sjogren syndrome. Conclusion: the occurrence of secondary sjogren syndrome affected by disease duration but independent of DAS28 Rheumatoid arthritis.

Keywords: secondary Sjogren syndrome, Rheumatoid arthritis, Disease duration, Disease Activity

1. Introduction

Sjögren syndrome (SS) is a chronic autoimmune inflammatory disease that initially involves the exocrine glands, resulted in their functional defacement. Sjögren syndrome can present either alone (primary Sjögren’s syndrome (pSS)) or in association of an underlying connective tissue disease, most commonly rheumatoid arthritis (RA) or systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) (secondary Sjögren’s syndrome (sSS)). (1) Clinically the hallmarks of Sjögren’s syndrome are keratoconjunctivitis sicca and xerostomia, or named sicca complex. (2)

Sjögren’s syndrome is an autoimmune disease related to the group of collagenases. that is manifested by lymphocytic infiltration of the exocrine glands, leading to their functional impairment. The inflammatory process involves cells of the lacrimal or salivary glands. However, other organs and systems can be affected. (3)

The chief pathogenesis of primary Sjögren’s syndrome is the distribution of T cells and B cells regulation, with central contributos from innate pathways of inflammation. So that many of these same concepts may be relevant to the pathogenesis of secondary Sjögren’s syndrome; although, most researching into the mechanisms of the disease was focusing on patients with the primar form of the disease, & may be many of the immunologic features of secondary Sjögren’s syndrome are determined by the pathogenic mechanisms involving the associated disorders. (2) The present study aims to study if the occurrence of secondary Sjögren syndrome have any association with disease duration &/or disease activity of Rheumatoid arthritis.

2. Patients & Methods

A comparative study was performed in Baghdad Teaching Hospital / Department of Rheumatology. This study was conducted on patients after approval of the research protocol by the Research Scientific Committee. The study samples consist of ninety patients, 60 Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patients of either gender with age range (25- 60), of them (30 patients with secondary Sjögren syndrome (sSS) diagnosed according to American-European Consensus Group criteria (AECC) (4) & 30 RA patients diagnosed clinically by rheumatology specialists) and both of them evaluated by disease activity depending on DAS 28 “Disease Activity Score in 28 Joints” (DAS28)” & 30 Healthy control subjects.

The study sample divided into three groups:

Group I: (n=30) sSS patients with RA.
Group II: (n=30) RA patients.
Group III: (n=30) healthy control subjects.

Exclusion Criteria

Past head and neck radiation treatment; hepatitis C infection; acquired immunodefi ciency syndrome (AIDS); preexisting lymphoma; sarcoidosis; graftvs.-host disease; use of anticholinergic drugs (since a time shorter than fourfold the half-life of the drug)

Diagnoses of the secondary Sjogren syndrome patients according to American-European Consensus Group criteria (AECC), all included patients subjected to Schirmer test “Cutoff for abnormally low tear production is 5 mm distance or less usually”, (2), whole unstimulated salivary flow rate “a less than 1.5mL is considered abnormal or xerostomia”. (4). Also those patients should have (+ve ocular symptoms & oral symptoms) then evaluation of the (DAS 28)

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carried out by specification of the no. of swollen & tender joints in 28 joints encompassing the small joints in the "hands, wrists, elbows, shoulders, and knees". The score is derived from a complicated formula, (5). DAS28 is carried on both studied groups (RA & sSS).

Statistical analysis:
All data were interpreted in a computerized database structure. "Statistical Package for Social Sciences" (SPSS) version 20 was applied. Comparisons were done using Contingency Coefficient (CC) test for the cause's correlation ship of the association tables; P value was considered statistically significant when < 0.05. The Receiver operating Characteristic (ROC) analysis was done for ranking quantitative parameters in descending manner according to their area under the curve (AUC), to figure out the most affected parameters by the disease status.

3. Results
Results demonstrated that, vast majority of a diseased groups are reported at (40 – 49) yrs., and at (60 – 70) yrs. for the RA, and sSS with mean and standard deviation (48.30 ± 10.02) yrs., and (52.65 ± 9.88) yrs. respectively, and highest percentages of the diseased groups were found at females, 10.02) yrs., and (52.65 ± 9.88) yrs.

Distribution of DAS-28 results in two diseased groups
With respect to "DAS28-Result levels", result showed that relationship are reported (CC=0.279) in light of increases mainly low level of DAS 28-Result in RA group, and MDA level in both groups, especially regarding sSS group, then followed by HAD level similarly. In addition to that, rather than no significant difference at P>0.05 are accounted between the two diseased groups in light of DAS28-Result responding, but according to low calculated significant level, it make more informative for that level to be reported, rather than simply stating that statistical significant was not achievel.(6)that illustrated in figure & table 3

### Table 2: Distribution of the studied groups according to gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>RA</th>
<th>sSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: Distribution of DAS28-Result levels responding according to studied groups with comparisons significant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>DAS28-Result</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>C.S.</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remission</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(LDA)</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MDA)</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(HDA)</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) NS: Non Sig. at P>0.05; C.C.; Contingency Coefficients.

Figure 2: Distribution of the samples according to gender

Figure 1: Distribution of the sample according to age

Table 1: Distribution of studied groups according to age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>sSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 70</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean ± SD</td>
<td>48.30 ± 10.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diseased Groups Duration: sSS revealed highly significant difference comparing with RA group, at p<0.01 in Receiver operating Characteristic curve (ROC), which illustrated in figure & table 4.

Disease Activity: Regarding disease activity which measured by DAS28-Score the finding result of the present study explained that the occurrence of sSS was unaffected by disease activity, also studies done by (9, 10, 11) are agreed with the current study. In the other hand (8, 12, 13) they found that the occurrence of sSS are increased in RA patients who had higher disease activity.

Duration of the disease: Our results showed that there was a significant difference in disease duration between RA & sSS which illustrated in ROC curve, so this lead to the suggestion that secondary SS occurrence may relate to disease duration. This results in line with study done by (8); they proposed that patients with sSS have old age & long duration of the disease than those with RA only &/or pSS. While on the other hand studies done by (11, 12, 14); they found that no relations between duration of the disease & sSS occurrence.

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Author Profile

Dr. Fatma A. Abdulkareem received the B.S. in Dental and Maxillofacial surgery and M.S. degrees in Oral Medicine from College of Dentistry/Baghdad University in 2002 and 2012 respectively. During 2002-2012 stayed in different institutions at Iraqi Ministry of Health. Now study to award the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Oral Medicine.

Prof. Dr. Fawaz Dawad Abdulrazzaq. Graduated from college of Dentistry/Baghdad University at 1991, he gained B.D.S degree. In 1999 gained M.Sc.in oral medicine and in 2004 gained Ph.D. in oral medicine from College of Dentistry/Baghdad University. Now he is full Prof. in oral medicine in the oral diagnosis department at college of Dentistry/Baghdad University.

Dr. Mohammed H. Alosami received the M B Ch B FROM the college of Medicine / Al-Mustanserrey University at 1993 . Then he received the certificate of Iraqi Board of inneral medicine at 2000& Arabic Board in internal medicine at 2002 CABM, and the fellowship of and the certificate of subspeciality in rheumatology and medical rehabilitation from the Iraqi board of medical specialization FIEMS(Rheumatology) at 2003.then he join the staff of the college of Medicine of Baghdad at 2010 and now he is assistant Prof.of medicine and consultant Rheumatologist and head of Rheumatology unit at Baghdad teaching hospital.