



Association Of Rheumatoid Arthritis And Autoimmune Diseases: What Are The Particularities?

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Introduction

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic inflammatory rheumatism characterized by immune system dysfunction, with the synovial membrane as the target tissue. This genetic background may be associated with other autoimmune diseases. Our aim was therefore to study the particularities of this association and its impact on the activity and therapeutic management of rheumatoid arthritis.

Materials and methods

We conducted a retrospective study including 139 patients with rheumatoid arthritis meeting the ACR EULAR 2010 criteria and followed up between 2017 and 2024 at the rheumatology department at CHU Med VI in Marrakech. Two groups were identified: without (G0) and with associated autoimmune diseases (G1). Clinical, biological, radiological data and therapeutic modalities were collected and compared between these two groups by Student's t-test. The significance level was set at p = 0.05.

Results

In our study, 89.9% were women, mean age 53.7 ± 12.1. With 24.5% patients had an autoimmune disease associated with RA: Sjögren's syndrome (19.4%, n = 27), type 1 diabetes (0%, n = 0) and autoimmune thyroiditis (13%, n = 9.4). There was a clear predominance of females in the G1 group compared to males. Rheumatoid factor (RF) and anti-CCP antibodies were positive in 74.1% and 77.9% of patients respectively

Variable	G0	G1	P value
Female rate	86.7%	100%	<0,001
• Rheumatoid factor level	130,51	132,97	0,93
• Anti-CCP antibody level	265,43	205,73	0,16
Structural damage	78,1	79,4	0,57
Extra-articular manifestations			
• Rheumatoid nodules	1 %	2,9 %	0,01
• Osteoporosis	20%	47,1%	0,002
• Lung disease	32,4 %	35,3 %	0,008
RP activity			
DAS28 Average CRP	5,42	5,34	0,64
Average CDAI	40,30	41,66	0,54
Inflammation markers			
• SV	46,61	39,69	0,31
• CRP	33,68	30,81	0,77
The use of :			
Corticosteroid therapy	91,4%	91,2%	0,83
Methotrexate	81 %	73,5 %	0,30
Biotherapy	8,6%	8,8%	0,81

Table 1: comparison between G0 (RA alone) and G1 (RA + associated autoimmune diseases):

Conclusion

Our study showed a clear female predominance and a higher prevalence of extra-articular manifestations in patients with autoimmune disease associated with rheumatoid arthritis. However, this association did not influence disease activity or the use of biotherapies.