Nailfold Videocapillaroscopy as a Candidate Biomarker for Organ Involvement and Prognosis in Patients with Systemic Sclerosis

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sonal view of the authors is in favour of RTX instead of CYC, as a second line treatment, based on their personal experience and emerging literature data. RTX could be used as an add-on treatment to MMF in refractory cases; this combination seems effective and safe. Azathioprine could be an alternative in female patients wishing to conceive. HSCT could be considered in patients with severe/life-threatening disease who have failed conventional treatment. The most promising therapeutic approach currently being evaluated in phase 3 trials is most likely the combination of MMF plus pirfenidone.

There is no doubt that interest in SSc is growing steadily over the years with an increasing number of investigators involved in both experimental and clinical research; the pharmaceutical industry is also investing in the development and testing of new drugs. We can only hope that these will eventually lead to a better understanding of disease pathogenesis and development of effective therapeutic approaches.

REFERENCES


Venous thromboembolism events among RA patients

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ABSTRACT

Background: Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is associated with an increased risk for venous thromboembolism. However, so far, relatively few and small size-based studies have been conducted. We aimed to investigate the link between RA and venous thromboembolism utilizing a large sample of subjects originating from a large data base. Materials and methods: The study was performed utilizing the medical database of Clalit Health Services, the largest healthcare provider in Israel. We enrolled all patients with RA and age- and gender-matched controls. Chi-square and t-tests were used for univariate analysis and a logistic regression model was used for a multivariate analysis. RA patients were compared to controls regarding the proportion of venous thromboembolic events (defined as deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism or both). Multivariate logistic regression was employed to assess factors associated with thromboembolic events. Results: The study included 11,782 patients with RA and 57,973 age- and gender-matched controls. RA patients had a higher rate of venous thromboembolism events compared with controls (6.92% vs. 3.18%, respectively, p<0.001). RA and mean C-reactive protein levels were found to be independently associated with the proportion of thromboembolic events (OR 2.27 for RA and 1.07 for each 1 mg/dL increment of mean C-reactive protein, respectively). Conclusion: RA and C-reactive protein levels are independently associated with venous thromboembolic events. Physicians should be aware of such findings and have a lower threshold for suspecting detecting such events in patients with RA, mainly those with mean high levels of C-reactive protein.

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ABBREVIATIONS:
RA: Rheumatoid Arthritis
BMI: Body Mass Index
CHS: Clalit Health Services
CRP: C-Reactive Protein
DVT: Deep Vein Thrombosis
IL-6: Interleukin-6