

Autoimmune Diseases Associated to Autoimmune Hepatitis: A Retrospective Study of 24 Tunisian Patients

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Abstract : Introduction: Autoimmune hepatitis (AIH) is a chronic inflammatory liver disease of unknown cause. Concomitant autoimmune disorders have been described in 30-50% of patients with AIH. The aim of our study is to determine the prevalence and the type of autoimmune disorders associated with AIH. Material and Methods: It is a retrospective study over a period of 16 years (2000-2015) including all patients followed for AIH. The diagnosis of AIH was based on the criteria of the revised International AIH group scoring system (IAIHG). Results: Twenty-four patients (21 women and 3 men) followed for AIH were collected. The mean age was 39 years (17-65 years). Among these patients, 11 patients(45.8%) had at least one autoimmune disease associated to AIH. These diseases were Hashimoto's thyroiditis (n = 5), Gougerot Sjogren syndrome (n=5), Primary biliary cirrhosis (n=2), Primitive sclerosant Cholangitis (n=1), Addison disease (n = 1) and systemic sclerosis (n=1). Patients were treated with corticosteroids alone or with azathioprine associated to the specific treatment of associated diseases with complete remission of AIH in 90% of cases and clinical improvement of other diseases. Conclusion: In our study, the prevalence of autoimmune diseases in AIH patients was 45.8%. These diseases were dominated by autoimmune thyroiditis and Gougerot Sjogren syndrome. The investigation of autoimmune diseases in autoimmune hepatitis must be systematic because of their frequency and the importance of adequate management.

Keywords : autoimmune diseases, autoimmune hepatitis, autoimmune thyroiditis, gougerot sjogren syndrome

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