



CORRELATION BETWEEN DIGITAL ULCERS AND SSA ANTIBODIES IN SYSTEMIC SCLEROSIS PATIENTS: A PRELIMINARY STUDY.

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BACKGROUND

Systemic sclerosis (SSc) is a chronic disease of unknown cause characterized by diffuse fibrosis, which leads to morphological changes, vascular anomalies and loss-of-function in the skin, joints and internal organs. Until now, there's little evidence in the medical literature assessing the correlation between SSA antibodies and skin abnormalities in patients with SSc. This study aims to assess if SSA antibodies levels could predict the occurrence of digital ulcers in patients with SSc.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

72 patients with SSc were primarily selected from a hospital database. The inclusion criteria were aging from 18 years, diagnosis of SSc based on the ACR/EULAR 2013 score, description of presence or absence of digital ulcers and registered SSA antibodies levels. 28 patients had SSA antibodies levels registered. Secondary classification using the ACR/EULAR score for SSc diagnosis resulted in 23 eligible patients for the analysis. Those 23 patients were assessed for the presence or absence of digital ulcers parallel with the SSA antibodies levels.

RESULTS

There were 20 (87%) females in the sample, most of them (19 or 83%) were Caucasian. Median age was 58 years. The positivity of the SSA antibodies was observed in three patients (13%). Six patients (26,1%) presented digital ulcers on physical examination. Positivity of SSA antibodies was observed in only one patient (16.7%) from the six presented with digital ulcers.

CONCLUSION

In this sample of patients with SSc, the positivity of the SSA antibodies levels couldn't be correlated to the occurrence of digital ulcers. More studies with bigger samples need to be done to confirm this finding.