



DRY EYE IN SYSTEMIC LUPUS ERYTHEMATOSUS PATIENTS

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BACKGROUND

Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) patients may have associated dry eye. This can be associated (or not) with secondary Sjögren's Syndrome. It is unknown if the occurrence of the dryness is associated with SLE activity or cumulative damage.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We studied 70 SLE patients for the presence of dry eye by Schirmer test, disease activity by SLEDAI (SLE-Disease activity index) and cumulative damage by SLICC/ACR (Systemic Lupus International Collaborating Clinics/American College of Rheumatology). Patients were also submitted to the OSDI (Ocular Surface Disease Index) questionnaire and to the questioning of the presence of dry eye and dry mouth. Epidemiological and treatment data and autoantibody profile were extracted from the charts.

RESULTS

Dry eye by Schirmer test was present in 51.4% of the sample. No association of the presence of dry eye with SLEDAI and SLICC were found, neither with subjective feeling of dryness (all with $p=ns$). SLEDAI was higher in those that complained of dry eye ($p=0.03$). Treatment profile did not influence in the presence of dry eye ($p=ns$) that was more common in older patients ($p<0.0001$). Anti dsDNA had a negative association with the presence of positive Schirmer test ($p=0.0008$).

CONCLUSION

Dry eye detected by Schirmer test in SLE patients has no association with disease activity nor cumulative damage. Anti dsDNA seems to have a protective effect in this context.