

Sjögren's Syndrome in the Elderly

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Please cite this article as: Nouira H. et al. Association of Scleroderma with Multiple Myeloma: A Rare Association. Middle East Journal of Age and Ageing. 15(3):35. DOI: 10.5742MEJAA.2018.93537

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Sjögren's syndrome (SS) is an autoimmune disorder characterized by keratoconjunctivitis sicca and xerostomia resulting from lymphocytic infiltration of the lacrimal and salivary glands.

The aim is to determine the epidemiological, clinical, biological and etiological features of SS in the elderly.

Methods: This is a retrospective study of 14 cases of SS in the elderly (age ≥ 65 years) collected in the internal medicine department of Mahdia (Tunisia) during a period from 2011 to 2017. All our patients meet the European criteria.

Results: The mean age of patients was 69.4 years (range 65-75 years). There is a marked predominance in women (sex ratio=0.16). The mean time to diagnosis was 12 months. Glandular manifestations were revealing the disease in 92.8%. The dry syndrome was constant. Extra glandular manifestations were frequent (71.4%) : arthralgia in 57.2%, neuropsychiatric involvement in 5 cases (35.7%) and peripheral neuropathy in three cases. Interstitial nephropathy was observed in one case. Pulmonary fibrosis was observed in one case. The accessory salivary glands revealed stage III or IV of Chisholm in three cases (21.4%). The salivary gland scintigraphy showed an aspect in favor of SS in 2 cases. Immunologically, the anti-SSA and SSB were positive in two cases

and the FR in one case. Concerning the etiological diagnosis, the SS was primitive in 10 cases (71.4%). It was secondary to rheumatoid arthritis in two cases, a systemic lupus erythematosus in one case and autoimmune thyroiditis in one case. The occurrence of a lymphomatous transformation was not noted.

Conclusion: Our study shows that the extra-glandular manifestations of primary SS are common in elderly. However, the prevalence of immunological abnormalities is low.