



AUTOIMMUNE BULLOUS DISEASES

USEFULNES OF ELISA TEST IN MONITORING PATIENTS WITH PEMPHIGUS

A Ponziani⁽¹⁾ - L Corti⁽²⁾ - D Fanoni⁽¹⁾ - R Lucchini⁽¹⁾ - L Venegoni⁽¹⁾ - S Muratori⁽²⁾ - E Berti⁽²⁾

Università Degli Studi Di Milano, Dipartimento Di Fisiopatologia Medico-chirurgica E Dei Trapianti, Milan, Italy⁽¹⁾ - Fondazione Irccs Ca' Granda - Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, U.o.c. Dermatologia, Milan, Italy⁽²⁾

Introduction: Commercially available ELISA test to detect autoantibodies against desmoglein-(DSG) 1 and 3 are commonly used in the diagnosis of pemphigus. However, the utility of this test in follow-up is still controversial.

Objectives: Aim of the study was to evaluate retrospectively the correlation between autoantibody titers and clinical evolution in a large cohort of patients.

Material and Methods: We enrolled 367 patients with a diagnosis of pemphigus confirmed by direct immunofluorescence. For each patients we collected clinical, indirect immunofluorescence and ELISA data (2455 sera were analyzed).

Results: At the time of diagnosis ELISA test showed a correlation with clinical activity. Never the less in a 8% of patients ELISA titer was negative with active disease and in 4,5% of patients ELISA titers were positive without active disease. During follow-up only 33% of patients showed correlation between autoantibodies titer and clinical activity. However, correlation rise up to 77% considering patients' global trends. In fact, in a large number of cases, titers had a slower decline than lesions while an increase of titers preceded the clinical appearance of lesions in case of relapses. In 23% there was not a correlation between autoantibodies and clinical trend (16% of patients maintained high levels of circulating autoantibodies despite the achievement of clinical remission).

Conclusions: To our knowledge this is the first study that analyze the correlation between ELISA titers and clinical activities in such a large cohort of patients. ELISA test is still valid for follow-up of patients with pemphigus. However, one should consider that: some patients have always negative titers, a non-negligible percentage of patients presents positive titers even in clinical remission and autoantibodies and lesions are often not time matched. Nevertheless, it is important to consider patients' global trend, knowing that an increase of autoantibodies titers could predict a clinical reactivation.

