MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT AND DEMENTIA IN PRIMARY SJÖGREN SYNDROME

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Objective: Primary Sjögren syndrome (PSS) is a systemic autoimmune disease. The aim of this study was to explore PSS patients with cognitive complaints.

Methods: Twenty four patients (mean age 55 ± 12.3 years, including 20 female) with PSS and cognitive complaints were selected. Patients were tested with the BCcogSEP, a French translation of the Brief Repeatable Battery for Neuropsychological Examination. The results were compared with the standard for each test and with the scores for 24 patients with multiple sclerosis (MS), matched for age, sex, and educational level. White matter lesions were assessed by brain MRI.

Results: Fifteen of the 24 PSS patients (63\%) presented with cognitive disorders vs. 18/24 MS patients (75\%). Six PSS patients have isolated cognitive disorders. Four patients had dementia in the PSS group and three of them had also myelitis. There was no significant difference in any of the 14 subtests of the BCcogSEP between the PSS and MS groups. An analysis of mental functions showed a predominance of cognitive disorders in speed of information processing, verbal memory, working memory, and immediate memory. The degree of brain white matter lesions was significantly correlated with degree of cognitive dysfunction (p=0.016).

Conclusions: Cognitive impairment -mild or dementia, isolated or not- exists in some patients with PSS. The subcortical cognitive impairment seems to be similar to that seen in MS patients and is correlated with brain white matter lesions. These dysfunctions and correlations need to be confirmed in larger studies.