

Characteristics of patients with late onset Axial Spondyloarthritis

RESEARCH TEAM

Margarida Lucas Rocha¹, Rita Pinheiro Torres², Sofia Ramiro³, Jaime C. Branco^{2,4}, Fernando Pimentel-Santos^{2,4}, Alexandre Sepriano^{2,4}

¹Rheumatology Department, Centro Hospitalar Universitário do Algarve, Faro, Portugal, Faro, Portugal, ²Rheumatology Department, Centro Hospitalar de Lisboa Ocidental, Hospital Egas Moniz EPE, Lisboa, Portugal, ³Department of Rheumatology, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, Netherlands, ⁴CEDOC, NOVA Medical School. Faculdade de Ciências Médicas da Universidade NOVA de Lisboa., Lisboa, Portugal

ABSTRACT

Rationale: The Assessment of SpondyloArthritis international Society (ASAS) classification criteria for axSpA were developed for, and should therefore be applied only, in patients with chronic back pain starting before 45 years of age. This age-limit follows the belief that the disease is rare in older patients. Yet, the prevalence of axSpA with onset later than 45 years, has been reported to be as high as 11%. Moreover, limited data suggest that late onset-axSpA seems to manifest differently compared to young onset disease.

Aim: To determine the prevalence of late-onset axSpA and to compare the clinical characteristics of these patients with those with early onset of the disease.

Population: Patients with a clinical diagnosis of axSpA included in Reuma.pt with available information on the age of symptom onset.

Study design: Cross-sectional, multicenter, nationwide study using baseline information from Reuma.pt, the Portuguese registry of patients with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases.

Analysis plan: The data will be analysed descriptively. Differences in patient- and disease-characteristics of patients with early- and late-onset axSpA will be formally tested with the independent sample's t-test for continuous variables and the Chi-squared test for categorical variables.

Expected results: We expect to inform the rheumatology community on whether late-onset axSpA is a recognizable entity within the spectrum of the disease. And if so, if there are differences in disease manifestations between early- and late-onset axSpA.

Ethics: This study will be conducted according to the Declaration of Helsinki and the International Guidelines for Ethical Review of Epidemiological Studies. Results will be presented in an objective way and will not be hidden or manipulated.