INTRAVENOUS HIGH DOSE GLUCOCORTICOIDS CAUSE PROLONGATION OF QT INTERVAL IN CONNECTIVE TISSUE DISEASE PATIENTS EXCEPT ANTI-RO POSITIVE SUBGROUP

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Background: Recent literature indicates that anti-Ro antibodies may be associated with prolongation of corrected QT (QTc) interval in the adult patients with connective tissue diseases. Moreover, glucocorticoids (frequently used in the therapy) are known to probably induce electrocardiographic changes including prolongation of QT interval. Prolongation of QTc interval is a risk factor for malignant ventricular arrhythmias. We hypothesised that patients with anti-Ro positivity have a higher risk of QT prolongation especially in the case of high dose intravenous glucocorticoids (IVGC) treatment.

Objectives: The aim of the study was to analyse risk of QTc interval prolongation in anti-Ro and anti-La positive patients before and after high dose IVGC treatment in patients with connective tissue diseases.

Methods: We performed a retrospective study of 115 patients (21 males), mean age of 48±14.7 years, range 19-78 years with connective tissue disease. Anti-Ro antibodies were examined in all patients before IVGC treatment. The patients were given 20-1000 mg methylprednisolone i.v. during five consecutive days. ECG recording was performed at baseline and after IVGC. The QT intervals were measured in each of 12-lead standard ECGs from two consecutive cycles. The QT intervals were measured from the onset of QRS complex to the end of the T wave by the means of a tangential method. Frierdica formula was used to obtain heart-rate-corrected values for QT intervals.

Results: Comparing patients with anti-Ro positivity (n=39; 33.9%) and anti-Ro-negativity (n=76; 66.1%), we found significant difference in QTc interval; QTcRo+ = 417.2±28.4ms and QTcRo- = 420.8±26.4ms (P=0.51), respectively. Admission of IVGC showed significant prolongation of QTc in all patients, mean QTc1 before treatment was 399.4±26.2ms, and QTc2 after therapy 412.7±27.2ms, P=0.00021. On the other hand, anti-Ro and anti-La positivity showed shorter QTc interval 391±17.7ms, to compare patients without these antibodies QTc=414.8±25.7ms, P=0.019 after treatment.

Conclusion: IVGC treatment significantly prolongs QT interval. Prolongation of QT over 445 ms was found in nine patients, but ventricular arrhythmias were not observed. The presence of anti-Ro and anti-La antibodies did not show QT prolongation. Therefore, shortening of QTc interval needs further confirmation. Motivated by this experience, we consider ECG monitoring and careful observation of patients during IVGC treatment.

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HCQ COULD ACT ON SLE PATIENTS THROUGH THE MODULATING EXPRESSION OF IL-8 ALONG WITH S100 PROTEINS

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Background: Some reports indicated that S100A8 and S100A9 proteins were associated with disease activity of lupus nephritis(LN) [1]. However, there have been no reports about the mechanism of additional hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) treatment for systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) patients with low disease activity.

Objectives: To clarify the mechanism of additional HCQ treatment for Japanese SLE patients with low disease activity.

Methods: All the 44 patients were enrolled in this study. These patients had been receiving additional oral HCQ sulfate continuously for at least 3 months. These patients had no need for additional immunosuppressants including glucocorticoids, during this study because of their sustained low disease activity for 3 months prior to starting HCQ. Low disease activity was defined as SELENA-SLEDAI score of 8 or less with no activity in major organ systems. As conventional immunological and clinical assessment for SLE disease activity were determined to examine the levels of complement (C3, C4, CH50), anti-dsDNA antibody, blood cell count. SELENA-SLEDAI and CLASI score. Serum levels of S100A8 and S100A9 reported as novel markers for SLE disease activity[1] were measured using ELISA (CircuLex ELISA Kit, MBL) at the time of HCQ administration as well as 3 months later. In addition, several expressions of cytokines (IFN-α, IFN-γ, TNF-α, IL-2, IL-4, IL-5, IL-8, IL-9, IL-10, IL-17, IL-1α, IL-1β, VEGF, GM-CSF, G-CSF, CCL2, CCL4, CXCL1) were measured by multiplex assay (Human Luminex assay, RD systems).