Background: Systemic sclerosis (SSc) is a systemic autoimmune disease characterized by progressive cutaneous and internal organ fibrosis. Oropharyngeal manifestations are disabling and treatment options are limited. Fat Tissue Grafting (FTG) can be used for treating facial manifestations of the fibrosis.

Objectives: In this study, we aimed to assess the safety and efficacy of FTG of our cohort of patients with SSc.

Methods: We enrolled 20 SSc (18W, 2M) patients, from 2016 to 2019, suffering from facial sclerosis and restricted mouth opening capacity. FTG was carried out in accord with modified Coleman’s procedure (1): fat tissue was taken from periumbilical or trochanteric areas and was injected in 8 different points around the mouth. No side effects or adverse reactions have been documented. Evaluations included mouth opening capacity by measuring interincisal distance, oral functionality (MHISS scale) and patient global satisfaction (by Global Health scale).

Results: A 11 mm (8 - 18mm range) median increase of interincisal distance was reported at months 6 and 12 of patients at month 12, too (p<0.003). A significant improvement in MHISS scale was also observed (p<0.003). The patient satisfaction questionnaire showed 95% positive results and 80% of the patient replied affirmatively to the question about the repetition of FTG but only 2 patients required new FTG after 12 months.

Conclusion: Our results showed that FTG improved mouth opening capacity and that aesthetic and functional results were satisfying to about 90% of the patients; long-term effects of this type of treatment are currently unknown. However, our and literature data at 12 months follow-up seems to confirm the benefits in long term, despite the filling effect is over.

This study – that’s one of the largest case series described right now (2) - supports the possible therapeutic role of autologous FTG in improving facial sclerosis both in aesthetic and in functional aspects.

References:

Disclosure of Interests: None declared

DOI: 10.1136/annrheumdis-2020-eular.1527