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AUTOIMMUNE GASTRITIS IN GASTRIC BIOPSIES

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Introduction. Autoimmune gastritis (AG) is an immune mediated corpus-restricted atrophic gastritis which can be associated with Vitamin-B₁₂ deficiency, either with or without pernicious anaemia. In the general population, the prevalence of this disease has been estimated to vary between 2-5%. AG is a microscopic disease because the patients are usually asymptomatic or with vague symptoms. In addition to that, clinicians rarely find any endoscopic changes. AG only becomes a clinical disease when pathologists diagnose it during gastric biopsies performed for various other clinical indications.

Aim. the aim of the study was to identify the most important morphological changes in stomach biopsies of AG patients.

Material and methods. The samples were collected through endoscopy of 24 patients. A histopathological study was carried out on biopsies of antrum and corpus of the stomach. These biopsies were prepared for microscopic examination and were stained using hemotoxylin-eosin, Gimza method, immunohistochemistry method. Software package Statistics 10.0 and Microsoft Excel were used for statistical analysis.

Results and discussion. There were 22 (91.7%) females and 2 (8.3%) males (F:M=11:1). The age of the patients ranged from 21 to 78 years. The mean age was 57.9±12.2 years. The diagnosis of atrophic gastritis in all patients was confirmed by the presence of specific antibodies. In 5 (20.8%) cases, there was a decrease in the level of serum vitamin B₁₂, in another 5 (20.8%) cases, the level of ferritin was reduced. In 2 cases, both indicators were reduced. In 11 (45.8%) patients, an increase in liver enzymes (ALT and AST) was detected.

Histological examination of gastric biopsy specimens showed atrophy in the area of the corpus of the stomach in all cases, in the area of the antrum - in 12 (50%) patients. In AG, gastric corpus polyps (n=7/29.2%) are more common than antrum polyps (n=1/4.2%) (p=0.017). None of the cases of AG were associated with Helicobacter Pylori infection. Out of 24 cases, all cases showed pseudopyloric metaplasia (100%), whereas 20 (83.3%) cases had intestinal metaplasia and only 3 (12.5%) cases revealed pancreatic type metaplasia.

Conclusion. As a result of the study, it was revealed that AG develops 11 times more often in women than in men. In all cases of AG, atrophy of the corpus of the stomach was revealed, in none of them was Helicobacter pylori infection observed. In AG, gastric corpus polyps are statistically more common than antrum polyps (p=0.017).