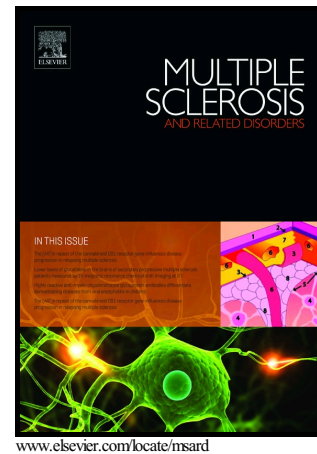


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Painful tonic spasm in neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorders: prevalence, clinical implications and treatment options

Ju Liu, Qin Zhang, Zhiyun Lian, Hongxi Chen, Ziyang Shi, Huiru Feng, Xiaohui Miao, Qin Du, Hongyu Zhou*

Department of Neurology, West China Hospital, Sichuan University, Guo Xuexiang #37, Chengdu 610041, China

*Corresponding author. Tel: +86 028 85423550; Fax: +86 028 85423550. zhouhy@scu.edu.cn

Abstract

Background

Painful tonic spasm (PTS) is a common symptom in patients with neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorders (NMOSD). This study aimed to obtain further insights into the prevalence, characteristics, and treatment of PTS in patients with NMOSD, and to systematically investigate and compare the clinical features and prognosis of NMOSD with and without PTS.

Methods

We reviewed the medical records and prospectively interviewed patients with NMOSD who attended the West China Hospital of Sichuan University in Chengdu, China between September 2014 and December 2016.

Results

In total, 52 of the 230 patients with NMOSD experienced PTS (22.61%). Patients with NMOSD and PTS were characterized by a higher age at onset ($P = 0.017$), higher annual relapse rate (ARR) ($P = 0.003$), higher ARR of myelitis ($P = 0.011$), and a tendency to experience pruritus ($P = 0.025$). Sodium channel blocking antiepileptic drugs (carbamazepine or oxcarbazepine) had higher efficacy than gabapentin in the treatment of PTS ($P = 0.001$). Although the progression index was higher in patients with PTS, this difference did not reach statistical significance ($P = 0.05$).

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