

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Autoimmunity Reviews

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/autrev



Review

Comorbid association of antiphospholipid antibodies and migraine: A systematic review and meta-analysis



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ARTICLE INFO

Article history: Received 15 February 2017 Accepted 22 February 2017 Available online 7 March 2017

Keywords:
Antiphospholipid antibodies
Anticardiolipin antibodies
Anti-β2-glycoprotein I antibodies
Lupus anticoagulant
Migraine
Meta-analysis

ABSTRACT

Background: Antiphospholipid antibodies (aPLs) namely anticardiolipin (aCL) antibody, anti- β 2-glycoprotein I (β 2GPI) antibody and lupus anticoagulant (LA) are autoantibodies produced against anionic phospholipids and proteins on plasma membranes. Migraine is a primary headache disorder which has growing evidences of autoimmune-mediated pathogenesis and previous studies suggested the presence of aPLs in migraine patients. Aims: The aim of this study was to evaluate the comorbid association between aPLs (aCL, anti- β 2GPI and LA) and migraine compared to healthy controls.

Methods: Studies were searched through PubMed, ISI Web of Science and Google Scholar databases without restricting the languages and year (up to October 2016) and were selected based on the inclusion criteria. Two authors independently extracted data from the included studies. All analyses were conducted by using random effects model to calculate the odds ratio (OR) and 95% confidence interval (CI). Quality assessment was carried out by using the modified Newcastle-Ottawa Scale (NOS). Publication bias was evaluated via visualization of funnel plots, Begg's and Egger's tests.

Results: The database searches produced 1995 articles, 13 of which were selected (912 migraineurs and 822 healthy controls). 8.59%, 15.21% and 4.11% of the migraineurs exhibited aCL, anti- β 2GPI and LA which was 4.83, 1.63 and 3.03 times higher, respectively, than healthy controls. A significant presence of aCL (OR: 3.55, 95% CI: 1.59–7.95; p=0.002) or anti- β 2GPI antibodies (OR: 2.02, 95% CI: 1.20–3.42; p=0.008) was observed in migraine patients, however, LA was not significantly associated (OR: 2.02, 95% CI: 0.50–8.37; p=0.320). Majority of the studies (n=10 of 13) demonstrated NOS score of 7 or above and no significant publication bias was observed.

Conclusion: Migraine might be an autoimmune-associated neurologic disorder. The presence of aCL or anti- β 2GPI antibodies was significant in migraine patients compared to healthy controls, suggesting an involvement of these autoantibodies in migraine attack.

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Abbreviations: aCL, anticardiolipin; anti-β2cPl, anti-β2-glycoprotein I; aPLs, antiphospholipid antibodies; APS, antiphospholipid syndrome; BBB, blood-brain barrier; CGRP, calcitonin gene-related peptide; Cl, confidence interval; DRVVT, dilute Russell's viper venom test; ICHD, International Classification of Headache Disorders; KCT, kaolin clotting time; LA, lupus anticoagulant; MeSH, Medical Subject Heading; MOOSE, Meta-analysis of Observational Studies in Epidemiology; NOS, Newcastle-Ottawa Scale; OR, odds ratio; PGE2, prostaglandin E2; RR, risk ratio; RVVT, Russell's viper venom time; SLE, systemic lupus erythematosus; T_c, T-Cytotoxic; T_h, T-helper; TNF-α, tumor necrosis factor-α; T_{reg}, T-regulatory.

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1. Introduction

Antiphospholipid antibodies (aPLs) are a heterogeneous group of autoantibodies which react against anionic phospholipids and proteins on plasma membranes. Low titers of aPLs are observed in 1–5% of the healthy population, however, persistently high titers of aPLs [anticardiolipin (aCL), anti- β 2-glycoprotein I (β 2GPI) antibodies and lupus anticoagulant (LA)] have been observed in patients with antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) clinically presenting recurrent arterial, venous thrombosis and/or pregnancy morbidity [1–4]. High titers of aPLs were also observed in APS patients suffering from different neurologic disorders such as migraine, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, cognitive impairment and dementia in which migraine has been the most frequently observed neurologic manifestations (up to 40%) [5].

Migraine is a primary recurrent headache disorder that affects approximately 18.5% of the world population [6], making the condition as one of the most disabling and costly medical complaints [7–9]. Although the complete pathogenesis of migraine attack is unclear, autoimmunity has been suggested recently to play a causative role in migraine pathogenesis [10,11]. Women are more susceptible to autoimmune disorders [12], likewise they are also more likely than men to be diagnosed with migraine [13]. Moreover, abnormal levels of several modulators of the immune system including CD4 $^+$ or CD8 $^+$ T cells, T-regulatory (Treg) cells [11,14], tumor necrosis factor (TNF)- α [15] and prostaglandin E2 (PGE2) [16] have been observed in migraineurs particularly during the migraine attack phase. Martin et al. [17] observed that upon administration of immunotherapies, there is a decreased frequency [risk ratio (RR): 0.48)] and disability (RR: 0.55) of migraine headache

in younger subjects (\leq 45 years of age), suggesting that autoimmunity modulation represents an avenue to treat migraine patients.

Several primary studies have investigated the comorbid association between migraine and the presence of aPLs. Although some of the studies reported the significant association of aPLs positivity with migraine [18,19], there were also studies that did not observe such relationship [20,21]. Therefore, the aim of this systematic review and meta-analysis was to identify the co-occurrence of aPLs in migraine patients compared to healthy subjects.

2. Methods

This meta-analysis was designed, implemented and reported based on the guidelines published by the Meta-analysis of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (MOOSE) group [22].

2.1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

2.1.1. Types of studies

Prospective case-control studies published in any languages were included in which the presence or absence of aPLs (LA and/or aCL and/or anti- β 2GPI antibodies) was reported in migraine patients compared to healthy controls. Studies published as review articles, case reports, clinical trials, editorials, letters and comments were excluded.

2.1.2. Types of participants

Migraine patients of any age, sex or race [without any underlying disorders including autoimmune diseases e.g., APS and systemic lupus

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