

UEG Week 2015 - Abstract Submission

Topic area: 4. SMALL INTESTINAL

Topic: 4.4. Small intestinal infections

UEG15-ABS-1487

A REASON WHY LACTOSE-FREE DIET CAN BE CLINICALLY INEFFECTIVE IN LACTOSE INTOLERANCE PATIENTS

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Has this abstract previously been presented?: No

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Introduction: Lactose intolerance is highly prevalent in Mediterranean area. A substantial proportion of patients remain symptomatic notwithstanding lactose-free diet.

Aims & Methods: Assess in a series of IBS consecutive patients: 1) the prevalence of lactose intolerance (LI); 2) the frequency of association of lactose intolerance with small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO); 3) the possibility of SIBO as a cause of symptom persistence in patients with lactose intolerance on lactose-free diet. Patients were recruited from November 2011 to July 2012 at the Gastroenterology Unit of Mauriziano Hospital U. 1st. Turin, Italy. Lactose malabsorption was assessed by means of Lactose Hydrogen Breath Test (LHBT) and SIBO by means of Glucose Hydrogen Breath Test (GHBT), using Breath Tracker digital microlyzer, on 500 IBS patients (360 F; mean age 45±23 SD years) and 50 controls (30 F mean age 43±24 SD age). Lactose intolerance patients with SIBO were treated either with rifaximin 1200 mg a day for 2 weeks plus exclusion diet, or only with exclusion diet, randomly, on 1 to 1 basis, for 6 months. Symptoms frequency and intensity (abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhea) were recorded by means of a visual analogue scale. Statistical analysis were carried out by SPSS software.

Results: Prevalence of lactose intolerance resulted to be 59% in IBS patients and 6% in controls, with a statistically significant difference ($p<.001$). SIBO was present in 72% of patients with lactose intolerance in IBS group, and in none of the subjects with lactose malabsorption (3) from the control group. No significant difference was registered in gender and age between the 2 groups. After 6 months, 105 out of 106 patients affected by LI + SIBO treated with rifaximin + lactose free diet (99 %), and 34 out of 107 patients affected by LI + SIBO treated only with lactose free diet (32%) resulted completely asymptomatic, with statistically significant difference ($p<0,001$).

Conclusion: Lactose intolerance is a common condition in patients with IBS in Northwest Italy (59%), very frequently associated with SIBO (72%). This association turned out to be a major cause of symptom persistence in patients on lactose-free diet until successful eradication of SIBO was achieved.

I confirm having declared any potential Conflict of Interest for ALL authors listed on this abstract: Yes

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared

Keywords: Lactose intolerance, Prevalence, SIBO