Urinary Stones, Renal Cysts and Renal Impairment in Patients with Gout

Urmila Dhakad¹, Bhupendra Pal Singh²

INTRODUCTION

Gout is a metabolic disease caused by an inflammatory response to monosodium urate crystals, which may occur in people with hyperuricemia¹-². Urinary stones, renal cysts and renal failure have been reported in gout patients with higher prevalence as compared to normal population³-⁴. However, data on their complex relationship in gout patients is sparse in published literature. In the general population, prevalence of renal cyst on ultrasonography varies from 4.2 to 41%⁵-⁶. The occurrence of simple renal cyst has been related to male gender and aging⁷-⁸, with increased prevalence in elderly, in men. This study aimed to elucidate prevalence and relationship among them in gout patients.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

In this prospective study conducted between August 2014 and January 2018 at a tertiary care institution, 107 patients with gout were included after institutional ethics committee approval for the study. Outdoor and indoor patients who fulfil the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) classification criteria for gout were included in the study⁹-¹⁰. Written informed consent of subjects was taken prior to participation in the study. Detailed clinical history and examination, dietary habits, body mass index (BMI), comorbidities (Diabetes, hypertension, coronary artery disease, dyslipidemia etc.), urine microscopy, serum uric acid and serum creatinine were noted in all patients. Ultrasonography (using 3.5 – 5.0 hertz probes) was done to detect urinary stones, renal cysts or any other abnormality in urinary system. Data was analysed using unpaired t test and Chi-square test. P value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

In gout patients urinary stones, renal cysts and impaired renal function were seen in 24.2% (26/107), 19.6% (21/107) and 28% (30/7) cases respectively. Serum uric acid level was significantly higher in those with impaired renal function. Occurrence of urinary stones was related to serum uric acid levels and duration of gout (p=0.038 and p < 0.0001). There was no association between renal stones and renal cysts (p=0.153). Presence of renal stones and duration of gout were associated with impaired renal function in gout patients (p=0.0011 and p=0.0006).

Conclusions: Urinary stones and renal impairment are significant health problems in gout patients. Urinary stones and long standing disease are associated with renal impairment in gout.

Keywords: Urinary Stones, Renal Cysts, Renal Impairment

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The results are presented in mean±SD and percentages. The dichotomous/categorical variables were compared by Chi-square test/fisher exact test. The continuous variables were compared by unpaired t-test. The P value < 0.05 was considered significant. All of the analyses were carried out by using SPSS 16.0 version (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA).

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the patient demography and parameters in gout patients. Mean age, body mass index (BMI) and male/ female ratio were 49.2±5.4, 26±5.4 and 97/10 (90.7%/9.3%). 57% patients of gout had co-morbidities (dyslipidemia, hypertension, diabetes mellitus and coronary artery disease

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Rheumatology, ²Professor, Department of Urology, King George’s Medical University, Lucknow, U.P., India

Corresponding author: Bhupendra Pal Singh, MCh, FRCS – Professor, Department of Urology, King George’s Medical University, Lucknow, U.P., India. Pin- 226003


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in 51.4%, 28.9%, 17.8% and 9.3% respectively). Urinary stones, renal cysts and impaired renal function (eGFR <60 ml/min/1.73 m² body surface area) were seen in 24.2% (26/107), 19.6% (21/107) and 28% (30/107) patients respectively. Renal stones alone, cysts alone and both cyst + stones were seen in 18/107(16.8%), 13/107(12.1%) and 8/107(7.4%) cases. Presence of renal cysts was not associated with presence of renal stones (p=0.153). Serum uric acid level was significantly higher in patients with impaired renal function as compared to those without impaired renal function (10.78±1.67 vs. 9.3±1.65, P<0.0001). Occurrence of urinary stones was related to serum uric acid levels and duration of gout (10.38±0.72 vs. 9.56±1.94, p=0.038 and 17.6±10.76 vs. 7.0±7.01, p<0.0001). Prevalence of stones and duration of gout were significantly higher in patients with impaired renal function as compared to those without renal function impairment (50% vs. 12.5%, p=0.0011 and 14.3±6.05 vs. 7.68±9.44, p=0.0006 respectively).

**DISCUSSION**

We found 24.2% prevalence of renal lithiasis in gout in this study. Higher prevalence of renal stones in gout as reported by many studies in literature16,17 may be related to higher serum uric acid concentration, amount of uric acid excretion and urinary acidification18,19. In our study we did not find any association between occurrence of renal cyst and renal lithiasis although some studies in literature5,20,21 report a variable negative or positive correlation between renal cysts and renal lithiasis. Higher serum uric acid levels in patients with renal stones and renal impairment in our study suggest the need of uric acid control and monitoring especially in those with long standing gout disease. Recently, Kim et al.22 also found increased risk of developing a new stone with increasing level of serum uric acid concentration among men with asymptomatic hyperuricemia. Although urinary uric acid concentration does not seem to be a risk factor for stone21, allopurinol reduces calcium oxalate stone recurrence among patients with isolated hyperuricosuria24. Limitations of our study are 1) we did not measure urinary pH and urinary citrate, which may also variably affect renal stone formation and 2) limited number of patients in our study. Inspite of unexplained and variable causes of different types of stones formation in gout, stricter control of serum uric acid level might reduce stone formation in addition to preventing renal impairment in these patients. Larger studies with assessment of more risk factors may be required to further address these complex issues in gout patients.

**CONCLUSION**

Urinary stones and renal impairment are significant health problems in gout patients. Urinary stones and long standing disease are associated with renal impairment in gout.

**REFERENCES**


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