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The application of the rACR scoring system in the diagnosis of giant cell arteritis

Sean Hamlin¹, Mansoor T², Lynch N² and Moneley D²

¹Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Ireland

²Beaumont Hospital, Ireland

Background: The gold standard test for diagnosing Giant Cell Arteritis (GCA) is a Temporal Artery Biopsy (TAB). The proposed ACR criteria and more recently the revised ACR criteria are scoring systems developed to aid diagnosis. We aim to investigate the utility of the rACR criteria compared to the original ACR criteria in reducing unnecessary TAB.

Method: We conducted a retrospective study of 59 patients undergoing TAB in the last 5 years in Beaumont Hospital. We collected demographic data, biochemical results, presenting features and histology results. The ACR score and rACR score is compiled.

Result: Data was analyzed from 53 samples and ACR scores were compiled. 17 scored <3 and 36 scored 3-5. All 11 positive biopsies were in the 3-5 score range. 45 patients were analyzed with rACR scores. 8 were excluded due to not meeting the inclusion criteria. Of the 11 positive biopsies, 2 were in the 3-4 score range and 9 were in the ≥5 score range. In the ACR method, 36% of all biopsies score as low risk pre-biopsy. In the rACR method 84.4% of all biopsies score in the low and intermediate risk group pre-biopsy and 15.6% of all biopsies score in the high risk group pre-biopsy.

Conclusion: The rACR scoring system may be a useful tool to categorize patients into low, intermediate and high risk of GCA pre biopsy. Performing TAB is of benefit in low and intermediate risk groups but may be of minimal benefit in the high risk group.

Biography

Sean Hamlin has completed his BA in Mathematics at Boston College and is currently pursuing his Medical degree at the Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland. He has completed a review and retrospective study of Exocrine Pancreatic Insufficiency in Acute Pancreatitis in affiliation with the Department of HPB Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic. He is actively involved in research with the Vascular Surgery Department in Beaumont Hospital in Dublin and with the General Surgery Department at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

hamlinseanw@gmail.com

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