

DYSFUNCTION OF THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM – THE MECHANISM OF FORMATION OF IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME IN PATIENTS WITH RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

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Violations of the autonomic nervous system often accompany the course of rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Moreover, there is a well-founded opinion about an etiopathogenetic role of autonomic nervous system dysfunction in the genesis of RA (Koopman F.A. et al., 2016). At the same time, people with autonomic imbalance predominate among patients with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Furthermore, intestinal dyspepsia is often considered as one of the clinical markers of the syndrome of autonomic dystonia.

The purpose of research – to study the condition of the autonomic nervous system in patients with RA and concomitant IBS.

Materials and methods. 52 patients with RA were examined. 27 patients with RA and IBS formed the main group. The average age of the patients was $45 \pm 3,84$ years. In all cases, the diagnosis of RA preceded the onset of IBS. 25 patients with RA without signs of IBS formed a comparison group. Both groups of patients were representative of each other according to the main characteristics (age, sex, seropositivity of RA, duration of the disease, etc.). The status of the autonomic nervous system was studied according to A.Veyn's "Standardized questionnaire for revealing signs of vegetative disturbances" (subjective evaluation from patient) and "Scheme examination for revealing signs of autonomic disturbances" by A.Vein (objective evaluation by a doctor).

Results and discussion. The questioning by "Standardized questionnaire for ..." revealed that autonomic nervous system disorders occur significantly more frequently in patients with RA and IBS (21 patients out of 27) than in the comparison group (12 patients out of 25) ($\chi^2 = 4,96$; $p=0,026$). During the medical examination ("Scheme of examination ..."), autonomic nervous system disorders were detected in 20 (74,1%) patients in the main group and 12 (48.0%) in the comparison group ($\chi^2 = 4,88$; $p = 0,027$). The more pronounced autonomic dysfunction in the patients of the main group was confirmed by significant differences in the total number of scores in both subjective ($18,37 \pm 0,871$ and $15,44 \pm 0,874$ points, $p = 0,022$) and objective assessments ($31,37 \pm 1,772$ and $26,08 \pm 2,011$ points, $p = 0,024$). The coincidence of the results of a subjective and objective evaluation of autonomic dysfunction for an individual patient was 95,2% for the main group, and 100% for the comparison group.

Conclusions. The comorbidity of RA and IBS exists mainly in conditions of autonomic nervous system imbalance. Formation of IBS in patients with RA can be considered as autonomic visceral dysfunction. It is a result of disturbance of the regulatory influence of the autonomic nervous system.