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Dergimizin değerli okuyucuları,

2023 yılının üçüncü sayısı ile sizlerle buluşuyoruz. Dergimizi, güncel, ilgi çekici ve zengin bilimsel içerik ile oluşturmaya gayret ediyoruz. Her geçen sayıda kalitemizi yukarıya taşıyoruz. Böylece artık Uluslararası indekslere girebilecek düzeye ulaşmış bulunuyoruz. Yakın zamanda, dergimizi 'uluslararası dergi' kategorisine sokmak ana ve yakın hedefimiz. Bu amaçla kabul edilen yazılarda oldukça seçici davranıyoruz. Bu sayıda 18 adet yüksek kaliteli makale ile karşınızdayız. Obeziteden organ nakline, radyolojik görüntüleme den antibiyotik kullanımına, sağlık okuryazarlığından fındık işçilerine kadar çok çeşitli konuları ele aldığımız bu sayımız, umarız sizin için de eğitici ve keyifli bir sayı olur.

Sağlıcakla kalınız...

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Obezitenin Medikal Tedavisinde Liraglutide Etkinliğinin Araştırılması

Investigation of the Effectiveness of Liraglutide in the Medical Treatment of Obesity

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Öz

Amaç	Glukagon-benzeri peptid-1 (GLP-1) analogu olan liraglutidin diyabetten bağımsız olarak obezite tedavisinde kullanımı onaylanmıştır. Çalışmamızda liraglutidin obezite tedavisinde etkinliğini araştırıldı.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Çalışmamıza 18 yaş ve üzeri ortalama yaşı 40,9±10,5 olan 303 hasta (201 kadın) alındı. 2018-2021 yılları arasında Genel Dahiliye Polikliniği'ne başvuran fazla kilolu ve obez hastaların dosyaları incelendi. Tıbbi beslenme tedavisi ve egzersiz programı ile liraglutide 3 mg/gün en az bir ay alan hastalar çalışmaya alındı. Hastalar liraglutide kullanım sürelerine göre ayrılarak vücut kitle indeksi (VKI), ilaç etkinliği ve yan etkileri her ay değerlendirildi.
Bulgular	Hastaların VKI dağılımına bakıldığında 80 hasta (%26,4) fazla kilolu, 128 hasta (%42,2) evre 1 obezite, 61 hasta (%20,1) evre 2 obezite, 34 hasta (%11,2) ise evre 3 obezite olarak değerlendirildi. Hastalar Liraglutide kullanım süresine göre (233 hasta 1-4 ay, 59 hasta 5-8 ay ve 11 hasta ≥9 ay) 3 gruba ayrıldı. Bu grupların ortalama yaşı sırasıyla 41,2±10,5, 39,8±10,9 ve 40,2±10,4; ortalama VKI'si 34,3±2,4 kg/m ² , 33,9±4,2 kg/m ² ve 39,5±5,1 kg/m ² ; ortalama kilo kaybı ise 6,4 kg, 12,5 kg ve 21 kg saptandı. Her üç grupta da başlangıç kilosuna göre anlamlı kilo kaybı gözlemlendi (p<0,001). Hastaların ilk bir ayda %5 kilo kaybı hedefine ulaşma oranı %46, ilk 2 ayda %86, ilk 3 ayda ise %90 saptandı. En sık görülen yan etki bulantıydı.
Sonuç	Liraglutide fazla kilolu ve obez hastalarda diyet ve egzersizle kombine olarak verildiğinde özellikle 6 ay ve üzeri kullanımda %20'lere varan kilo kaybı sağlamaktadır. Obezite tedavisinde GLP-1 analoglarının kullanımına ait uzun vadeli diğer çalışmalar ile mortalite üzerine etkilerini ortaya koymakta fayda vardır.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Obezite, tedavi, liraglutid, Glukagon-benzeri peptid-1 (GLP-1)

Abstract

Introduction	This study investigated the efficacy and safety of liraglutide, a glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) analogue, in the treatment of obesity.
Materials and Methods	The study enrolled 303 patients over 18 years of age with overweight or obesity (201 female, mean age 40.9 years). The records of patients admitted from the Internal Medicine Outpatient Clinic between 2018 and 2021 were retrospectively reviewed. Patients taking liraglutide (3 mg) daily in combination with diet and physical activity were included. Body mass index (BMI), drug efficacy, and side effects were evaluated once monthly.
Results	Participants' BMI was evaluated; 80 of them were overweight, 128 of them were obese stage 1, 61 of them were obese stage 2, and 34 of them were obese stage 3. Patients were divided into 3 groups according to the duration of liraglutide intake (1-4 months for 233 patients, 5-8 months for 59 patients, and ≥ 9 months for 11 patients). Mean age was 41.2±10.5, 39.8±10.9, and 40.2±10.4; mean BMI was 34.3±2.4 kg/m ² , 33.9±4.2 kg/m ² , and 39.5±5.1 kg/m ² ; and mean weight loss was 6.4 kg, 12.5 kg, and 21 kg, respectively. All groups experienced significant weight loss compared with their baseline weight (p<0.001). The percentage of patients achieving weight loss goal was 46% at month 1, 86% at 2 months, and 90% at 3 months. In addition, the most common side effect was nausea.
Conclusion	In combination with lifestyle modification, liraglutide was well tolerated and resulted in significant weight loss, especially using for more than 6 months.
Keywords	Obese, treatment, liraglutide, glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1)



GİRİŞ

Obezite vücuttaki yağlı dokunun artmasıyla karakterize olan; kardiyovasküler hastalıklar, diyabetes mellitus, birçok malignite türü ve uyku apne sendromu gibi kronik hastalıklara sebep olan ve prevelansının gün geçtikçe artması nedeniyle hızla tedbir alınması gereken bir hastalıktır.¹ Günümüzde yetişkinlerin %40'ı ve her 3 çocuktan biri fazla kilolu veya obez olması nedeniyle risk altındadır.² Fiziksel aktivitenin artırılması ve diyet modifikasyonları obezite ile mücadelede anahtar rol oynamaktadır.

Obezite hastalarında günümüzde birçok farmakolojik tedavi kullanılmaktadır. Pankreatik lipaz inhibitörü olan orlistat, santral sinir sistemi etkili Fentermin-topiramet kombinasyonu, opioid antagonisti-antidepresan etkili naltrexone-bupropion, semptomimetik etkili Benzphetamine, Diethylpropion, Phentermine, Phendimetrazine gibi ilaçların kullanımı etkinliğin düşük olması ve yan etkilerin fazla olması nedeniyle kısıtlıdır. Son yıllarda uzun süreli olumlu etkileri de ortaya çıkarılan GLP-1 agonistleri Liraglutide ve Semaglutide obezite tedavisinde ön plana çıkmaktadır.

Çalışmamızda diyet modifikasyonu ve fiziksel egzersiz programına alınan fazla kilolu ve obez hastalarımızda liraglutide kullanımının etkinliğini ve bu ilacın kullanımı sırasında oluşan yan etkileri değerlendirmeyi amaçladık.

GEREÇ ve YÖNTEMLER

Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği

Çalışmamız Memorial Bahçelievler Hastanesi etik kurulu tarafından değerlendirilmiş ve 2023/96 sayı numarası ile etik yönden uygun görülmüştür.

Araştırma Protokolü

2018-2021 yılları arasında genel dahiliye polikliniğine başvuran, 18 yaş üzeri, fazla kilolu ve obez, diyet modifikasyonu ve fiziksel egzersiz programına dahil edilen, aynı zamanda liraglutide tedavisi alan hastaların verileri retrospektif olarak değerlendirildi.

Her hasta günlük enerji ihtiyacına göre 500 kalori eksik olarak düzenlenmiş diyet listesi, ≥ 150 dakika/hafta fiziksel egzersiz programı, liraglutide tedavisini nasıl kullanacağı ve beklenen yan etkiler durumunda ne yapacağı konusunda bilgilendirilmişti. Liraglutide tedavisinin 0,6 mg/gün başlanarak haftada bir 0,6 mg artırılarak 4. hafta sonunda 3 mg/gün doza çıkıldığı gözlemlendi. Bulantı ve kusma nedeniyle tolerasyon problemi olan hastaların ise aynı dozda bir hafta daha devam edilerek kusmanın olmaması ve bulantının gerilemesi halinde ilaç doz artırımı yapılarak 3 mg/gün doza ulaşıldığı görüldü.

Hastaların ilk bir ay her hafta, sonrasında ayda bir defa kontrole geldiği görüldü. Hastaların kayıtları incelenerek bu izlemlerdeki diyet modifikasyonlarına uyum, fiziksel egzersiz programlarına uyum, ilaç yan etkileri ve beden kitle indeksleri kaydedildi. Bir aydan daha kısa süre takibe gelen, yan etkileri nedeniyle ilacı kullanmaya devam edemeyen, düzenli kontrole gelmeyen hastalar çalışma dışı bırakıldı.

Hastalar ilaç kullanım sürelerine göre 3 ana gruba ayrıldı: (i) 1-4 ay süre ilaç kullanan hastalar (ii) 5-8 ay süre ilaç kullanan hastalar (iii) ≥ 9 ay süre ile ilaç kullanımına devam eden hastalar. Tedaviye yanıt değerlendirmesinde 2019 obezite tanı tedavi kılavuzuna göre kilo kaybı en az %5 olan hastalar başarılı olarak değerlendirildi.³

İstatistiksel Analizler

Tanımlayıcı istatistiklerde veriler ortalama \pm standart sapma ve sayı/yüzde değerleriyle birlikte verilmiştir. Verilerin istatistiksel karşılaştırmasında sürekli veriler için normal dağılıma uygunluk kolmogorov-smirnov analizi ile değerlendirilmiştir. Bağımlı gruplarda öncesi sonrası ölçüm değerlerinin karşılaştırılmasında bağımlı gruplarda t-testi kullanılmıştır. İstatistiksel anlamlılık için %95 güven aralığında 0,05 in altındaki p değeri anlamlı olarak kabul edilmiştir. İstatistiksel analizler için SPSS v 21.0 programı kullanılmıştır.

BULGULAR

Çalışmamıza 201'i kadın ortalama 40,9±10,5 yaş 303 hasta alındı. Hastaların çalışma başında ortalama kilosu 95,8±18,3 kg; VKİ ise 33,5±4,7 kg/m² saptandı. Çalışmaya alınan hastaların 96'sı (%32) prediyabetik, 185'i (%61) normoglisemik, 22'si (%7) diyabetik hastaydı. Vücut kitle indekslerine göre hastaların dağılımına bakıldığında 80 hasta (%26) fazla kilolu, 128 hasta (%42) evre 1 obezite, 61 hasta (%20) evre 2 obezite, 34 hasta (%11) ise evre 3 obezite olarak değerlendirildi (Tablo 1).

Yaş (yıl ± SD)	40,9±10,5
Kadın (n,%)	201 (66,3)
Erkek (n,%)	102 (33,6)
VKİ kategorileri (n,%)	
27-29,9: Fazla kilolu	80 (26,4)
30-34,9: Evre I obezite	128 (42,2)
35-39,9: Evre II obezite	61 (20,1)
≥ 40: Evre III obezite	34 (11,2)
Diyabet durumu	
Normoglisemi (n,%)	185 (61)
Prediyabet (n,%)	96 (31,6)
Diyabet (n,%)	22 (7,2)

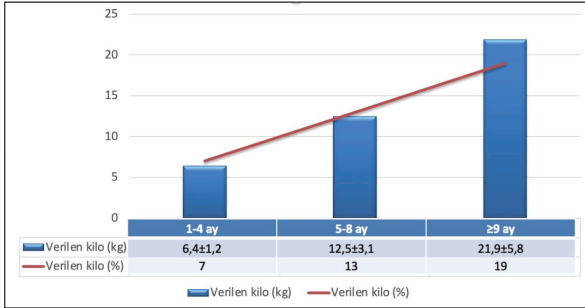
Çalışmaya alınan hastaların hepsi liraglutide 3 mg/gün dozunda kullanım hedefine ulaştı ve takibe alındı. Hastalar liraglutide kullanım sürelerine göre değerlendirildiğinde 233 hastanın (153 kadın, 80 erkek) 1-4 ay, 59 hastanın (39 kadın, 20 erkek) 5-8 ay ve 11 hastanın (9 kadın, 2 erkek) ise ≥9 ay süre ile ilaç kullanımına devam ettiği gözlemlendi. (i) 1-4 ay liraglutide kullanan hastaların ortalama yaşı 41,2±10,5, VKİ'si 34,3±2,4 kg/m²; (ii) 5-8 ay liraglutide kullanan hastaların ortalama yaşı 39,8±10,9, VKİ'si 33,9±4,2 kg/m²; (iii) ≥9 ay liraglutide kullanan hastaların ortalama yaşı 40,2±10,4, VKİ'si 39,5±5,1 kg/m² saptandı.

İlaç kullanım süresine göre (i) 1-4 ay liraglutide kullanan hastaların ilk ve son VKİ ortalaması 34,3/30,7 kg/m², ilk ve son kilo ortalaması 92,9/86,5 kg; (ii) 5-8 ay liraglutide kullanan ilk ve son VKİ ortalaması 33,9/29,5 kg/m², ilk ve son kilo ortalaması 95,9/83,3 kg, ortalama kilo kaybı 12,5 kg; (iii) ≥9 ay liraglutide kullanan hastaların ilk ve son VKİ ortalaması 39,5/31,9 kg/m², ilk ve son kilo ortalaması 108,8/87,8 kg, ortalama kilo kaybı 21 kg saptandı. Her üç grupta da başlangıç kilosuna göre anlamlı kilo kaybı gözlemlendi (p<0,001) (Tablo 2).

	Cinsiyet K/E (n)	Yaş (yıl±SD)	VKİ (ilk/son)	Kullanım süresi (ay±SD)	Kilo (ilk/son)	Kilo kaybı (Ort)	P
1-4 Ay Kullanan Grup 1 (n= 233)	153/80	41,2±10,5	34,3/30,7	2,2±0,9	92,9/86,5	6,4	<0,001*
5-8 Ay Kullanan Grup 2 (n= 59)	39/20	39,8±10,9	33,9/29,5	6,1±1	95,9/83,3	12,5	<0,001*
≥ 9 Ay Kullanan Grup 3 (n=11)	9/2	40,2±10,4	39,5/31,9	10,6±1,1	108,8/87,8	21,9	<0,001*

P: istatistiksel anlamlılık değeri, K: kadın, E: erkek. P değeri ile her üç grupta başlangıç kilosuna göre kilo kaybı kıyaslandı. Bağımlı gruplarda öncesi sonrası ölçüm değerlerinin karşılaştırılmasında t-testi kullanıldı. *: P<0,05 olan değerler istatistiksel olarak anlamlı kabul edildi.

Ortalama kilo kayıplarına göre değerlendirildiğinde (i) 1-4 ay liraglutide kullanan hastaların ortalama kilo kaybı 6,4 kg; (ii) 5-8 ay liraglutide kullanan hastaların ortalama kilo kaybı 12,5 kg; (iii) ≥ 9 ay liraglutide kullanan hastaların ortalama kilo kaybı 21 kg saptandı (Şekil 1).



Şekil 1. Liraglutide kullanım süresine göre kilo kaybı

Hastaların ilk bir ayda %5 kilo kaybı hedefine ulaşma oranı %46, ilk 2 ayda %86, ilk 3 ayda ise %90 saptandı.

Yan etkiler değerlendirildiğinde hastaların %60'ında bulantı (semptomatik tedavi ile geriledi), %10'unda konstipasyon, %8'inde diyare (1-2 defa, kansız, mukussuz), %5'inde migren (1 hastada tedavi erken sonlandırıldı), %5'inde gastro-özofageal reflü hastalığı, %2'sinde konsantrasyon güçlüğü (ilaç doz azaltımı yapılarak tedaviye devam edildi), %1'inde pankreatit görüldü.

TARTIŞMA

Çalışmamızda fazla kilolu ve obez hastalarda liraglutide tedavisinin klinik pratikte kullanımının kilo vermede etkinliği ve yan etki profili değerlendirildi.

İncretin peptit olan GLP-1 ve gastrik inhibitör polipeptit (GİP) glikoz bağımlı insülin sekresyonunu artırır. GLP-1 analogları insülin sekresyonunu artırır, glukagon salgılanmasını baskılar, mide boşalmasını yavaşlatır ve iştahı azaltır.⁴ Yarılanma ömrü 2 dakika olan GLP-1, dipeptidil peptidaz ve nötral endopeptidaz tarafından parçalanmaktadır.⁵ GLP-1 analogu olan liraglutidin yapısındaki aminoasit revizyonları ile yarı ömrü 13 saate çıkarılarak etkinliği süresi artırılmıştır.⁶ Tip-2 diyabetes mellitus hastalığının

tedavisinde diyet ve egzersize ek olarak GLP-1 analogunun kullanılması 2010 yılında onaylandı.⁷

Liraglutidin obezite tedavisindeki etkinliğini araştıran SCALE çalışmasında $VKİ \geq 30$ kg/m² olan veya $VKİ \geq 27$ kg/m² ve dislipidemi veya hipertansiyonu olan hastalarda 56 hafta izlem sonunda hedef HbA1c ve % 5 kilo kaybı plaseboya göre anlamlı derecede yüksek saptandı.⁸ 2022 yılında yayınlanan glarjin, glimepirid, GLP-1 ve DPP-4 inhibitörlerinin HbA1c'yi düşürme oranlarının karşılaştırıldığı çalışmada hepsinin etkin olduğu gözlenmiş olup hedef HbA1c oranlarına ulaşmada ve sürdürmede glarjin ve GLP-1 analoglarının anlamlı ölçüde olmasa da daha etkin oldukları gözlemlendi.⁹

Liraglutide kullanan hastalarda iştahta azalma ve gastrointestinal intoleransın da etkisiyle, diyabet regülasyonunun yanında belirgin kilo kayıpları dikkati çekmiş; bu etkinin 3 mg/gün doza çıkıldığında maksimuma ulaştığı gözlenmiştir.¹⁰ Diyabetik obez hastaların yanında, diyabetik fazla kilolu hastalarda da liraglutide dozu 3 mg/güne çıkıldığında kilo kaybının arttığı gözlemlendi.⁸ Sonrasında liraglutidin diyabetik olmayan ama fazla kilolu veya obez hastalardaki etkinliği araştırılmış; yine SCALE çalışmasında, liraglutid 3 mg/gün dozunda kullanan, $VKİ \geq 30$ kg/m² olan veya $VKİ \geq 27$ kg/m² ve dislipidemi veya hipertansiyonu olan hastalarda 56 hafta izlem sonunda hem kilo kaybı hem de metabolik kontrol liraglutide kullananlarda plaseboya göre anlamlı derecede yüksek saptanmıştır.¹¹ Kanadada yapılan bir çalışmada ise liraglutidin etkinliği obezite derecesine göre araştırılmış ve evre 1, evre 2 ve evre 3 obezlerde etkinlikte fark saptanmamıştır.¹² Çalışmamızda fazla kilolu, evre 1, 2 ve 3 obez hastaların hepsinde liraglutide 3 mg/gün doz kullanımında etkin kilo kayıpları gözlemlendi fakat özellikle maliyet nedeniyle hastaların %69'unun kullanım süresi 1-4 ay ile kısıtlı kaldı. Yine çalışmamızda liraglutidin kullanım süresi arttıkça kilo verme oranının da %20'lere ulaştığı gözlemlendi. Çalışmamızda liraglutid tedavisini daha uzun süre alan hasta grubunun vücut kitle indeksi daha yüksek saptandı. Bu da tedavi sırasında hastaların tedaviyi

sürdürme isteğinin önemine işaret edebilir. Sağlık sigortalarının GLP-1 analoglarını ödeme kapsamına alınması, ileride obezite ile mücadelede ciddi yarar sağlayacaktır.

Obezite tedavisinde farklı etki mekanizmaları ile birçok ilaç kullanılabilir. Pankreatik lipaz inhibitörü olan orlistatin ciddi gastrointestinal yan etkileri mevcuttur, tolere edilmesi zordur ve Avrupa'da yapılan bir çalışmada GLP-1 analoglarının orlistat ve glimepiride göre kilo vermede daha etkin olduğu gözlenmiştir.¹³ Santral sinir sistemi etkili Fentermin-topiramate kombinasyonu kardiyovasküler hastalığı olanlara, böbrek taşı olanlara verilemez, kontrolsüz hipertansiyonu olanlarda ve gebelikte kontrendikedir, GLP-1 agonistlerinin kullanılmadığı hastalarda tercih edilebilir. Opioid antagonisti-antidepresan etkili Naltrexone-bupropion, sempatomimetik etkili Phentermine+ topiramate ve pramlintide de kilo vermede liraglutide kadar etkin saptanmakla birlikte yan etkiler nedeniyle liraglutide kullanımı daha ön plana çıkmaktadır.¹⁴

Liraglutide tedavisinin kilo vermedeki etkinliği doz bağımlıdır ve 2,4-3,0 mg/gün dozuna çıkıldığında anlamlı derecede artmaktadır.¹⁵ Yan etkileri değerlendirildiğinde en sık bulantı ve kusma görülmekle birlikte ishal, anoreksiya, mesane disfonksiyonu, pankreatit ve böbrek yetersizliği saptanan vakalar bildirilmiştir.¹⁶ Bizim çalışmamızda doz artırımı sırasında özellikle 1,2-1,8 mg/gün geçişi sırasında bulantıları olmuş, birçoğuna semptomatik tedavi verilmekten tedavi süreci yönetilmiştir. Ayrıca 1 hastada tedavi bitimi sonrası biliyer pankreatit tespit edilmiştir. Gebelerde, ailede pankreatit hikayesi olanlarda ve ailede multipl endokrin neoplazi (MEN) 2A ve 2B hikayesi olan hastalarda liraglutide kullanımı önerilmez.

Liraglutide obezite tedavisinde etkin bir tedavidir. Fakat burada unutulmaması gereken esas husus obezite için kullanılan medikal tedavilerin hastanın tıbbi beslenme tedavisini ve fiziksel aktivitesini düzenlemesi için zaman kazandırmasıdır. Yaşam tarzı değişikliklerini başaramamış ve devam ettiremeyen hastaların obezite tedavisinden

Fayda görme şansı azalacaktır. Tedavi sırasında hastaların sık aralıklı takibi motivasyonlarını sağlamada ve idame ettirmede oldukça önemlidir. İlerleyen yıllarda obezite tedavisinde kullanılan güncel ilaçların daha fazla yarar sağlayacağı, tedavide tıbbi beslenme tedavisinin ve fiziksel aktivitenin ana belirleyici olacağı aşikardır.

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MA, TA, MK, Denetleme; YG, NŞ, YBT, TA, Malzeme, Veri toplanması ve İşleme; MA, YG, NŞ, YBT, Analiz ve Verilerin Yorumlanması; MA, YG, NŞ, YBT, TA, MK, Makale bölümleri; MA, TA, MK, tarafından yapılmıştır. Bütün yazarlar çalışmanın doğruluğu ve bütünlüğünden sorumlu olmayı kabul etmişlerdir.

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An Assessment of 25-hydroxyvitamin D Levels and Inflammation Markers in Diabetic Patients with Mild COVID-19

Hafif COVID-19'lu Diyabetik Hastalarda 25-hidroksivitamin D Düzeylerinin ve İnflamasyon Belirteçlerinin Değerlendirilmesi

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Abstract

Introduction	The effects of 25-hydroxyvitamin D (25(OH) D) on inflammation are gaining attention, particularly for diabetic individuals with COVID-19. Therefore, we examined 25(OH) D and inflammation-related markers in diabetic subjects with mild COVID-19.
Materials and Methods	This investigation was intended to be retrospective. The present study covered the medical records of patients who applied to our hospital between March 2020 and November 2022. All patients suffer from COVID-19. The control group (n = 30) had no diabetes, while the study group (n = 36) had diabetes. Inflammatory markers such as ferritin, C-reactive protein and erythrocyte sedimentation rate were measured in addition to 25 (OH) D levels in each subject. Also, the results of the complete blood count were obtained from the hospital database.
Results	Our participants were matched in terms of gender and age between study groups. ESR, CRP, ferritin, and 25 (OH) D levels, among other variables, did not significantly differ between the non-DM and DM groups (p>0.05). Also, we evaluated all participants according to deficiency of 25 (OH) D, and inflammatory markers were not evaluated in diabetic subjects with COVID-19. However, our findings showed that ferritin levels and HbA1c levels in diabetic individuals significantly correlated positively.
Conclusion	Diabetes mellitus and deficiency of 25 (OH) D are known as risk factors for COVID-19. But as compared to non-diabetic participants with COVID-19, our findings did not reveal any considerable elevation neither inflammatory markers nor changes 25 (OH) D in the diabetics.
Keywords	25-hydroxyvitamin D, COVID-19, Diabetes Mellitus, Inflammation

Öz

Amaç	25-hidroksi vitamin D'nin (25(OH) D) enflamasyon üzerindeki etkisi özellikle COVID-19 tanısı olan diyabetik hastalarda giderek daha çok dikkat çekmektedir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmada, hafif COVID-19 geçiren diyabetik hastalarda 25(OH) D ve enflamasyon belirteçlerini değerlendirmeyi amaçladık.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Retrospektif olarak planlanan bu çalışma Mart 2020 ile Kasım 2022 tarihleri arasında hastanemize başvuran hasta kayıtlarını kapsamaktadır. Hastaların hepsi COVID-19 tanısı almıştı. Kontrol grubu (n = 30) diyabet hastalığına sahip değilken, çalışma grubu ise (n=36) önceden Diabetes Mellitus tanısı almıştı. Ferritin, C-reaktif protein ve eritrosit sedimentasyon hızı gibi enflamasyon belirteçleri ve 25 (OH) D sonuçları her hastada mevcuttu. Ayrıca, tam kan sayımının sonuçları hastane veritabanından alınmıştır.
Bulgular	Katılımcılarımız çalışma grupları arasında cinsiyet ve yaş açısından eşleştirilmiştir. ESR, CRP, ferritin ve 25(OH)D düzeyleri DM ve DM olmayan gruplar arasında anlamlı farklılık göstermedi (p>0.05). Ayrıca tüm katılımcıları 25 (OH) D eksikliğine göre değerlendirdik ve COVID-19'lu diyabetik olgularda inflamatuvar belirteçler grupları arasında farklı değildi. Ancak bulgularımız, diyabetik bireylerde ferritin düzeyleri ile HbA1c düzeylerinin anlamlı derecede pozitif korelasyon gösterdiğini ortaya koymuştur.
Sonuç	Diabetes mellitus ve 25 (OH) D eksikliği COVID-19 için risk faktörleri olarak bilinmektedir. Ancak COVID-19'lu diyabetik olmayan katılımcılarla karşılaştırıldığında, diyabetik hastaların inflamatuvar belirteçlerinde ve 25 (OH) D düzeylerinde önemli bir değişim gözlenmedi.
Anahtar Kelimeler	25-hidroksi vitamin D, COVID-19, Diabetes Mellitus, İnflamasyon



INTRODUCTION

Coronaviruses are responsible for a range of respiratory tract infections in humans, encompassing both mild and severe clinical presentations. The severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and the illness it causes, coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), are both names given to the novel coronavirus that emerged as a major worldwide health problem.¹ The most prevalent clinical symptoms of COVID-19 infection include fever, fatigue, dry cough, headache, hemoptysis (coughing up blood), diarrhea, anorexia (loss of appetite), sore throat, chest pain, chills, nausea, and vomiting.^{2,3} Additionally, there have been reports documenting olfactory and taste disorders as a consequence of coronavirus infection.⁴ COVID-19 infection leads to tissue damage and the excessive release of pro-inflammatory cytokines, which in turn promotes the accumulation of granulocytes and macrophages, collectively referred to as pro-inflammatory cells. This process triggers an elevation in cytokine secretion and the aggregation of leukocytes, ultimately giving rise to a systemic inflammatory response known as macrophage activation syndrome (MAS) or secondary hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis (sHLH). This phenomenon is commonly referred to as a cytokine storm.⁵

Diabetes mellitus (DM), a well-recognized metabolic disorder, represents a significant global health concern affecting a large population worldwide. Inflammation has been recognized as both a risk factor and an etiological factor in the development and progression of type 2 diabetes. It serves a crucial role in determining the disease's clinical course.^{6,7} The association between DM and inflammation has been established through epidemiological studies conducted over the years. Adipose tissue is considered a primary source of inflammation, where infiltration of macrophages and other immune cells leads to an upregulation of inflammatory markers.⁸ Markers of inflammation generated from whole blood count such as the neutrophil/lymphocyte ratio (NLR), platelet/lymphocyte ratio (PLR), and lymphocyte/monocyte ratio (LMR), have been exten-

sively studied in the context of diabetes and diabetic complications, including diabetic retinopathy, cardiovascular disorders, and peripheral artery disease. The findings from these studies consistently demonstrate a close association between diabetes and its related disorders with inflammation. Moreover, these markers are found to be elevated in these pathologies.⁹⁻¹¹

The potential effect of 25-hydroxy vitamin D (25(OH) D) in modulating inflammation has attracted a growing amount of attention. Insufficient levels of 25(OH) D have been implicated in various infectious diseases, ranging from Crohn's disease and rheumatoid arthritis to DM. The influence of 25(OH)D levels on inflammation has been recognized as a potential factor in the pathogenesis and progression of these diseases.¹² 25(OH) D has been observed to possess anti-inflammatory properties. It contributes to the maintenance of a balanced inflammatory response by modifying the levels of cytokines that trigger inflammation.¹³ 25(OH)D deficiency and DM are recognized as prevalent risk factors for coronavirus infection, as they contribute to cytokine elevation and a robust inflammatory response. Inflammation is linked to both DM and COVID-19; therefore, the aim of this study was to examine the association between inflammatory markers and 25(OH)D levels in diabetic individuals with COVID-19.

MATERIAL and METHOD

Patients Selection

Participants at Taksim Training and Research Hospital between March 2020 and November 2022 had their medical records reviewed for this retrospective study. The study encompassed a total of 66 patient records, which were categorized into two main groups: non-diabetic (n=30) and diabetic (n=36) individuals. Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) and computed tomography (CT) diagnostic techniques were used to confirm COVID-19 infection in each patient included in the study. Patients who matched the following qualifications for the study were included: (i) age ranging from 18 to 85 years,

(ii) pre-existing diagnosis of DM) and no hospitalization specifically for coronavirus infection, and (iii) availability of 25(OH)D, inflammatory markers, and whole blood count results. The patients who had fasting blood glucose ≥ 126 mg/dL or HbA1c ≥ 6.5 % were enrolled the study as diabetic patients.

The following were the study's exclusion criteria: patients with a diagnosis of oncologic diseases and undergoing treatment for it, patients with rheumatic or autoimmune diseases, patients with advanced liver or heart failure diseases, being pregnant, and patients who had undergone surgical operations within the last month.

The institutional and/or national research committee's ethical guidelines were followed in all the methods used in this study that included people. The study adhered to the principles outlined in the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its subsequent amendments, or comparable ethical standards. Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the local research committee at Gaziosmanpasa Training and Research Hospital. [Approval No:2023-12].

Laboratory Measurements

All laboratory results of the subjects were obtained from the laboratory database. The biochemistry tests, including creatinine, glucose, aspartate transaminase (AST), albumin, and C-reactive protein (CRP) measurements, were conducted using commercial kits on the Roche Cobas c501 autoanalyzer. The levels of 25(OH)D and ferritin were determined using the Roche Cobas e601 immunoassay autoanalyzer (Roche Diagnostics, Mannheim, Germany). Glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) levels were analyzed using the Adams HA-8380V instrument by reverse phase cation exchange chromatography. The erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) was measured using the Alifax analyzer. Lastly, the complete blood count was performed using the Mindray BC6800 analyzer.

The hemogram-derived indices were calculated as follows:

- NLR (Neutrophil/Lymphocyte Ratio)
- PLR (Platelet/Lymphocyte Ratio)

Statistical Analysis

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 20.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL), was used to conduct the statistical analyses. The normality of variables was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Normally distributed parameters were expressed as mean \pm standard deviation (SD), while non-normally distributed variables were presented as medians with interquartile range (25th-75th percentile). Categorical variables were reported as absolute and relative frequencies (n and %). To assess differences between groups, the independent samples t-test and Mann-Whitney U test were employed, depending on the parametric assumptions. For categorical variables, the Fisher's Exact test or the Pearson Chi-square test were applied. Spearman's correlation analysis was used to perform correlation analyses. P-values less than 0.05 were regarded as statistically significant for all two-tailed comparisons.

RESULTS

Table 1 provides an overview of each of the research groups' demographic details and laboratory results. The gender distribution between the non-DM and DM groups did not differ significantly ($p > 0.05$). The proportion of female patients was higher than that of male subjects in both groups, with 70% and 64% females in the non-DM and DM groups, respectively. Additionally, there was no statistically significant difference in the two groups' median ages ($p > 0.05$).

It found that the groups' medians for glucose and HbA1c differed statistically ($p < 0.001$ for both). As expected, the DM group exhibited higher levels of glucose and HbA1c compared to the non-DM group ($p < 0.001$ for both variables). However, the values of 25(OH)D and ferritin were similar between the two groups ($p > 0.05$).

ESR, CRP, and white blood cell (WBC) levels for the in-

flammatory indicators did not differ considerably between the DM and non-DM groups. However, the absolute lymphocyte and neutrophil counts were found to be higher in the DM group compared to the non-DM group ($p=0.017$ and $p=0.023$, respectively). Furthermore, there were no significant differences in the neutrophil-to-lymphocyte ratio (NLR) and platelet-to-lymphocyte ratio (PLR) between the two groups ($p>0.05$).

Table 2 presents the demographic, clinical, and laboratory results of the participants categorized according to 25(OH)D deficiency. The prevalence of DM cases in the 25(OH)D deficiency group was higher than the normal 25(OH)D group, but this difference was not statistically significant ($p>0.05$). Similarly, there were no significant differences observed between the study groups in terms of inflammatory markers, including CRP, ESR, WBC, NLR, and PLR ($p>0.05$).

The direct relationship between inflammatory markers and 25 (OH)D and HbA1c were analyzed and it was found a significant positive correlation between ferritin and HbA1c in the patients diagnosed with DM ($r=0.335$, $p=0.006$).

Table 1: Summary of demographic features and laboratory results of all patients with COVID-19

	Non-DM (n=30)	DM (n=36)	P
Gender			
Female %	21 (70)	25 (64)	0.235
Male %	9 (30)	14 (36)	
Age, year	57 (48-66)	58 (54-63)	0.789
Creatinine, mg/dL	0.91 ± 0.16	0.81 ± 0.17	0.037
eGFR, mL/min.1.73 m ²	76.8 ± 11.6	88.3 ± 17.4	0.004
Glucose, mg/dL	93 (87-99.5)	133 (121-179)	<0.001
AST, U/L	19.2 ± 3.58	26.5 ± 13.1	0.006
Albumin, mg/dL	45 (43.7-47)	46.6(40-47.7)	0.802
25(OH)D, µg/L	18.3 (13.7-27.4)	16 (11.1-24.9)	0.434
HbA1c, %	5.4 (5.3-5.5)	7.1 (6.8-8.3)	<0.001
Ferritin, µg/L	66 (47.8-98)	79.4 (36-144)	0.705
ESR, mm/h	8 (4.5-16.5)	12 (5.75-19.5)	0.285
CRP, mg/dL	2.85 (1.16-5.96)	3.88 (1.46-7.35)	0.442
WBC, 10 ³ /µL	7.00 ± 2.23	8.07 ± 2.72	0.096
Lymphocyte, 10 ³ /µL	2.05 ± 0.62	2.62 ± 1.09	0.017
Neutrophile, 10 ³ /µL	3.98 (2.83-4.77)	4.71 (3.95-5.75)	0.023
Platelet, 10 ³ /µL	258 ± 53	273±100	0.466
Hemoglobin, g/L	133 ± 11	133 ± 16.4	0.929
NLR	1.84 (1.34-2.51)	1.79 (1.48-2.48)	0.850
PLR	137 ± 47.4	116 ± 48.3	0.086

DM: diabetes mellitus, eGFR: estimated glomerular filtration rate, AST: aspartate transaminase, HbA1C: hemoglobin A1c, ESR: erythrocyte sedimentation rate, CRP: C reactive protein, WBC: white blood cell, NLR: neutrophil lymphocyte ratio, PLR: platelet lymphocyte ratio

Table 2: Summary of inflammatory markers of patients in terms of vitamin D levels

	25(OH)D < 20 µg/L (n=36)	25(OH)D > 20 µg/L (n=30)	P
Gender			
Female %	27 (75)	12 (40)	0.178
Male %	9 (25)	18 (60)	
Age, year	57 (50.5 - 61.5)	58 (54 - 67.5)	0.438
Diabetes Mellitus, %	24 (67)	17 (57)	0.374
Creatinine, mg/dL	0.83 ± 0.19	0.88 ± 0.15	0.246
eGFR, mL/min.1.73 m ²	85.1 ± 18.4	81.6 ± 13.1	0.388
Glucose, mg/dL	110 (87.5-133)	122 (96-175)	0.112
AST, U/L	21 (17.5-27)	20 (16.5-25.1)	0.887
Albumin, mg/dL	45 (41-47)	45.2 (41.5-48)	0.660
HbA1c, %	6.8 (5.45-7.3)	6.6 (5.35-7.55)	0.530
Ferritin, µg/L	66 (39.5-136)	69 (37.5-118)	0.995
ESR, mm/h	10 (4.5-20)	8.5 (6-17.5)	0.872
CRP, mg/dL	3.58 (1.35-7.70)	2.85 (1.43-7.29)	0.722
WBC, 10 ³ /µL	8.05 ± 2.79	7.10 ± 2.18	0.139
Lymphocyte, 10 ³ /µL	2.54 ± 1.11	2.19 ± 0.71	0.139
Neutrophile, 10 ³ /µL	4.81 ± 2.10	4.52 ± 1.26	0.520
Platelet, 10 ³ /µL	269 ± 105	265 ± 46	0.240
Hemoglobin, g/L	129 ± 13.9	137 ± 13.5	0.017
NLR	2.27 ± 1.82	2.27 ± 1.00	0.998
PLR	119 ± 51.0	133 ± 45.4	0.240

eGFR: estimated glomerular filtration rate, AST: aspartate transaminase, HbA1C: hemoglobin A1c, ESR: erythrocyte sedimentation rate, CRP: C reactive protein, WBC: white blood cell, NLR: neutrophil lymphocyte ratio, PLR: platelet lymphocyte ratio

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the research was to examine the relationship between 25(OH)D levels and inflammatory marker levels in patients diagnosed with DM, as well as those currently diagnosed with COVID-19 infection. The study included all participants who were outpatient. According to the study's findings, there were no statistical differences between the non-DM and DM participants in terms of 25(OH)D, ferritin, CRP, or ESR levels. Furthermore, The NLR and PLR, which are derived ratios from the total blood count, did not show any differences comparing the two groups. However, there were significant differences observed in the absolute counts of neutrophils and lymphocytes between the non-DM and DM study groups. DM groups had higher levels of neutrophils and lymphocytes than the non-DM group. In addition to comparing the non-DM and DM study groups, the subjects were also analyzed based on 25(OH)D deficiency. However, the results did not show any significant differences among the subjects with regards to deficiency of 25(OH)D. Moreover, the analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between ferritin and HbA1c in diabetic patients.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, accumulating evidence has highlighted the association between DM and COVID-19 infection. Reports have shown that individuals with COVID-19, even those without a prior diagnosis of diabe-

Table 3: Correlation of inflammatory markers with vitamin D levels and hba1c

		CRP	ESR	Ferritin	NLR	PLR
Non-DM group	HbA1c	r=0.075	r=0.113	r=-0.125	r=0.001	r=-0.232
		p=0.547	p=0.393	p=0.316	p=0.999	p=0.061
	25(OH)D	r=-0.058	r=-0.076	r=0.039	r=0.082	r=0.063
		p=0.646	p=0.565	p=0.755	p=0.513	p=0.613
DM	HbA1c	r=-0.023	r=0.012	r=0.335	r=-0.094	r=-0.183
		group	p=0.928	p=0.006	p=0.450	p=0.141
	25(OH)D	r=-0.083	r=0.011	r=0.094	r=0.029	r=0.051
		p=0.506	p=0.936	p=0.452	p=0.816	p=0.685

DM: diabetes mellitus, HbA1C: hemoglobin A1c, ESR: erythrocyte sedimentation rate, CRP: C reactive protein, WBC: white blood cell, NLR: neutrophil lymphocyte ratio, PLR: platelet lymphocyte ratio

tes, often exhibit significant hyperglycemia.¹⁴ In line with these reports, several case-control studies have consistently demonstrated that patients with pre-existing DM are more likely to experience severe clinical outcomes following COVID-19 infection. These outcomes include a higher risk of developing severe respiratory symptoms, requiring intensive care unit (ICU) admission, and experiencing an increased mortality rate.¹⁵ The exact processes underlying the association between coronavirus infection and DM are still unclear. However, it is evident that individuals with comorbidities, particularly DM, are at a higher risk of experiencing severe and even fatal cases of COVID-19.^{16,17} The outcomes of COVID-19 infection in diabetic patients were strongly related to get mechanical ventilation and in-hospital mortality.^{17,18} Rajpal et al proposed a possible mechanism for the severity of coronavirus infection in diabetic patients. The researchers suggest that DM is closely associated with low-grade chronic inflammation, and hyperglycemia leads to increased expression of angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) in the lungs and other tissues, which serves as the viral entry pathway. The combination of pre-existing DM and COVID-19 infection results in powerful inflammatory responses known as cytokine storms, leading to more severe cases of coronavirus infection and a higher mortality rate among diabetic patients.¹⁹

A recent study has emphasized that 25(OH)D decreases the risk of COVID-19 mortality through various mechanisms. These include maintaining physical barriers by preserving cell junctions and gap junctions, elevating cellular immunity, decreasing cytokine storm by affecting interferons and tumor necrosis factor, and promoting balanced adaptive immunity via T cells.²⁰ In parallel with these findings, reports from different countries have been state that the status of 25 (OH) D is very essential to get coronavirus infection. studies have emphasized that 25 (OH) D deficiency could be a risk factor for COVID-19.^{21,22}

Pre-existing DM and a deficiency of 25 (OH)D are both

important risk factors for COVID-19 infection. The present results revealed that the patients with diabetes had a lower state of 25(OH) D than the non-DM group, but not statistical significance. Similarly, the percentage of DM cases in 25(OH) D deficiency group was higher than 25 (OH) D >20 µg/L groups without statistical significance. Singh et al have reported that the relationship between diabetic subjects with COVID-19 and 25(OH) D was proven by growing studies, and this relationship was clearer when the level of 25 (OH)D was below 10 µg/L.²³ In concordance with this report, Wang et al have suggested that the level of 25(OH)D may be a significantly prognostic indicator and may be a preventive therapy option for diabetic patients with COVID-19.²⁴ It has been stated that the patients with deficiency 25(OH) D and hyperglycemic state were higher risk at severe coronavirus infection, higher inflammatory response and worse outcomes of infection in recent report of Di Filippo et al.²⁵ On the other hand, a study from India reports that 25 (OH) D levels were statistically higher in the non-COVID-19 group compared to the COVID-19 patients with pre-existing Type 2 DM. In contrast to our results, this report revealed that serum CRP, ferritin, and IL-6 levels were increased in diabetic patients with COVID-19 who had a fatigue score above 4.²⁶ It is well documented that 25(OH) D suppresses Th1 and Th17 production as well as the expression of IFN-, TNF-, IL-1, IL-2, IL12, IL-23, IL-17, and IL-21. 25 (OH) D regulates the development of th2 and their anti-inflammatory secretion, including IL-4 and IL-10, in addition to minimizing the pro-inflammatory response.²⁷

We also investigated inflammatory markers in COVID-19 patients with pre-existing DM. The newly hemogram-derived parameters, such as NLR and PLR were not statistically different between the study groups. We found increased absolute lymphocyte and neutrophil counts in the DM group compared to the non-DM group. There are conflicting results in the literature about vitamin D and its effect on inflammatory markers. A meta-analysis recently published a summary of the reports related to the link be-

tween 25 (OH) D and inflammation in diabetic patients with COVID-19. The researchers concluded that vitamin D supplementation is beneficial for managing both diabetes and coronavirus infections. Also, it has been shown that 25 (OH) D reduces CRP levels.²⁸ However, some reports published contradictory results, like that supplementation of 25 (OH) D had no healthful effect on pro-inflammatory cytokines and TNF- α levels.²⁹

In patients with diabetes and COVID-19, we found an important relationship between ferritin and HbA1c. In parallel with our results, a study comparing blood parameters in diabetic patients diagnosed with COVID-19 showed an increased level of ferritin in COVID-19 positive diabetic patients compared to COVID-19 negative patients.³⁰ Wang et al has supported our results with their report, which showed elevated ferritin levels in diabetic patients diagnosed with COVID-19 compared to non-diabetic patients.³¹

There are some limitations to the current study. Our data did not involve detailed clinical and demographic characteristics of participants since it was planned as a retrospective study. In parallel with this, our study has limited number of participants. Additionally, some important inflammatory parameters associated with COVID-19 were missing, such as IL-6 and TNF- α .

In conclusion, we investigated 25 (OH) D and inflammatory markers in diabetic individuals with COVID-19. Given that our participants had no severe symptoms of COVID-19 and all of them were outpatients, we did not find any significant elevation in inflammatory indicators in diabetic patients with COVID-19, and 25(OH)D status was almost similar in the DM group compared to the non-DM group. However, it should be stated that ferritin and HbA1c levels were positively correlated in the DM group.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declared that there was no conflict of interest.

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Ethics Approval

The research followed the ethical guidelines established by the Helsinki Declaration and its later revisions, or those of an equivalent kind. The study was approved by the ethics board of Gaziosmanpasa Training and Research Hospital. Acceptance No. 2023-12.

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Aksiller Lenf Bezlerinin Manyetik Rezonans Görüntüleme (MRG) Tekstür Analizi Sonuçlarının Patoloji Sonuçları ile Karşılaştırılması

Comparison of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Texture Analysis Results with Pathology Results of Axillary Lymph Nodes

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Öz

Amaç	Bu çalışmanın amacı meme kanserli hastalarda metastatik aksiller lenf nodlarının (ALN) saptanmasında manyetik rezonans görüntüleme (MRG) ve tekstür analizi (TA) özelliklerinin etkinliğini araştırmaktır.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Çalışmaya 2018-2020 tarihleri arasında hastanemiz Girişimsel Radyoloji bölümünde ALN'lere yönelik ince iğne aspirasyon biyopsisi ve/veya kesici iğne biyopsisi işlemi yapılan, dinamik kontrastlı ve diffüzyon meme MRG'de patolojik görünümü ALN'si olan 18 yaş üzeri kadın hastalar dahil edilmiştir.
Bulgular	Benign ve malign lenf nodları arasında T2A yağlı hilus varlığı açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı farklılık vardı (p=0,008). MRG tekstür analizi sonuçlarının değerlendirilmesinde; benign ve malign grupta T2 area ve T2 skewness değerleri arasında (sırasıyla p=0,006; 0,029), ADC area ve ADC kurtosis değerleri arasında (sırasıyla p=0,027;0,005), postkontrast T1 area, postkontrast T1 variance ve postkontrast T1 kurtosis değerleri arasında (sırasıyla p=0,036;0,010; <0,001) anlamlı farklılık saptandı. Malign grupta yer alan olguların mikrometastaz ve makrometastaz durumunu ayırt etmede anlamlı olan MR özellikleri prekontrast T1 ağırlıklı görüntülerde ortalama sinyal intensitesi (p=0,048), MR tekstür parametrelerinden T2 ağırlıklı görüntülerde Area, Skewness, Kurtosis; difüzyon ağırlıklı görüntülerde ADC sekanslarda Area, Mean, Kurtosis, Sumentropi, Entropi; postkontrast T1 ağırlıklı görüntülerde Area ve Kurtosis değerleri olduğu görüldü (p:<0,001-0,015).
Sonuç	Manyetik Rezonans görüntüleme bazlı tekstür analizi giderek artan sıklıkta kullanılan bir uygulama olmasına rağmen literatürde aksiller lenf bezine yönelik MRG tekstür analizini araştıran yeterli çalışma yoktur. Noninvaziv ve tekrarlanabilir bir yöntem olan MRG TA, metastatik ALN'leri preoperatif dönemde karakterize etmede diğer MRG yöntemlerine katkı sağlamaktadır.
Anahtar Kelimeler	meme kanseri, lenf nodu, metastaz, manyetik rezonans görüntüleme (MRG), tekstür analizi

Abstract

Introduction	The aim of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and texture analysis (TA) features in detecting metastatic axillary lymph nodes (ALN) in patients with breast cancer.
Materials and Methods	The study included female patients over the age of 18 who underwent fine needle aspiration biopsy and/or cutting needle biopsy for ALNs in the Interventional Radiology department of our hospital between 2018 and 2020, and who had pathological ALN with dynamic contrast and diffusion breast MRI.
Results	There was a statistically significant difference between benign and malignant lymph nodes in terms of the presence of T2A fatty hilum (p=0.008). In the evaluation of MR texture analysis results; A significant difference was found between the T2 area and T2 skewness values (respectively p=0.006; 0.029), between ADC area and ADC kurtosis values (p=0.027;0.005, respectively), between postcontrast T1 area, postcontrast T1 variance and postcontrast T1 kurtosis values (respectively, p=0.036; 0.010; <0.001) in benign and malignant groups. MR features, which are significant in distinguishing between micrometastasis and macrometastasis in cases of the malignant group, mean signal intensity on precontrast T1-weighted images (p=0.048); Area, Skewness, Kurtosis in T2-weighted images of MR texture parameters; Area, Mean, Kurtosis, Sumentropy, Entropy in ADC sequences in diffusion-weighted images; Area and Kurtosis values were observed on postcontrast T1-weighted images (p:<0.001-0.015).
Conclusion	Although magnetic resonance imaging-based texture analysis is an increasingly common application, there are not enough studies in the literature investigating MRI texture analysis for axillary lymph nodes. MRI TA, which is a noninvasive and reproducible method, contributes to other MRI methods in characterizing metastatic ALNs in the preoperative period.
Keywords	breast cancer, lymph node, metastasis, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), texture analysis



GİRİŞ

Meme kanseri, kadınlarda en sık görülen kanserdir ve tüm kanserler arasında akciğer kanserinden sonra ikinci sırada yer almaktadır.¹ Meme kanserinde aksiller lenf nodu (ALN) metastazı yaygın olarak izlenir.² Meme kanserli hastalarda ALN metastazını saptamak, tedavi planlaması ve prognozun belirlenmesinde en önemli faktörlerden biri olarak yer almaktadır.² Meme kanseri olan hastalarda ALN'lerin durumu altın standart olarak sentinel lenf nodu biyopsisi (SLNB) ve aksiller lenf nodu diseksiyonu (ALND) ile değerlendirilir.³ Her iki yöntem de invaziv olup potansiyel komplikasyonlara ve morbidite riskine sahiptir. Meme manyetik rezonans görüntüleme (MRG), yeni teşhis edilmiş meme kanseri olan hastaların klinik evrelemede, memedeki hastalığın boyutunu tanımlamak, karşı taraftaki kanserleri saptamak ve lenfadenopatiji saptamak için sıklıkla kullanılır.⁴ Ameliyat öncesinde yapılan kontrastlı meme MRG'nin mamografi (MMG) veya ultrasonografi (USG) gibi diğer preoperatif görüntüleme yöntemleri kullanılarak saptanamayan kanser odaklarını saptamak için yararlı olduğu belirtilse de metastatik lenf nodlarını (LN) belirlemedeki etkinliği yetersizdir.⁵⁻⁹

Malign tümörlerin büyük kısmı hücresel, moleküler, yapısal-uzaysal farklılıklar gösteren karmaşık sistemlerdir.^{10,11} Tümör içi ve tümörler arası farklılıklar gösteren parametreler tümör heterojenitesi olarak adlandırılır.¹¹ Tümörler arası heterojenite farklı hastalarda aynı tip tümörler arası farklılıklara verilen isim olup farklı biyolojik davranışlar sergileyen, farklı klinik seyirlere neden olan farklı tümör alt tipleri sonucu ortaya çıkar.¹² Meme MR görüntülerinin insan gözüyle değerlendirilmesinin yanı sıra, son yıllarda ortaya çıkan güncel bir analitik yaklaşım, tekstür analizi (TA) yapan yazılımlardan yararlanılarak tümör heterojenitesini ölçmek üzere MRG görüntülerinin ve verilerinin kullanılmasıdır. Bu işlemden görüntülerin TA için görüntüdeki belirli bir alan işaretlenerek aracı yazılım yardımıyla bu alandaki piksellerin sinyal intensiteleri sayısallaştırılarak matematiksel modelleme yoluyla heterojenite indeksleri hesaplanır. TA standart görüntüleme protokollerinden

elde edilen verilere uygulanan bir teknik olarak standart görüntülemelerden elde edilen bilgiyi artırmaya yarar.¹³

Bu çalışmanın amacı meme kanserli hastalarda metastatik aksiller lenf nodlarının saptanmasında MRG ve TA özelliklerinin etkinliğini araştırmaktır.

GEREÇ VE YÖNTEM

1.Hasta Seçimi

Çalışmaya 2018-2020 tarihleri arasında hastanemiz Girişimsel Radyoloji bölümünde aksiller lenf bezine yönelik İİAB (ince iğne aspirasyon biyopsisi) ve/veya KİB (kesici iğne biyopsisi) işlemi yapılan 18 yaş üzeri kadın hastalar dahil edilmiştir. Hastaların çalışmaya dahil edilme kriterleri şu şekildedir:

- Memede kitlesi olup, dinamik kontrastlı ve diffüzyon meme MRG'de patolojik görünümlü aksiller lenf bezi olan olgular,
- Aksiller lenf bezine yönelik İİAB ve KİB yapılmış, sitopatolojik ve/veya histopatolojik tanısı konulmuş olgular.

Dışlama kriterleri şu şekildedir:

- MRG görüntülerinde ALN'leri değerlendirmeye engel olacak artefaktlar bulunan hastalar,
- Meme MRG'de patolojik görünümde ALN bulunmayan hastalar,
- Klinik ve patolojik verilerine ulaşılamayan hastalar,
- Preoperatif neoadjuvan kemoterapi veya radyoterapi uygulanan hastalar,
- Sitolojik olarak "Tanısal Olmayan Sitoloji (TOS)" ve "Kuşkulu Sitoloji (KS)" tanısı alanlar
- İİAB yapıp takip eden süreçte eksizyonel biyopsi tanısı olmayan hastalar.

Elektronik kayıtlarda dahil etme kriterlerine uygun 280 hasta saptanmış, dışlama kriterlerinden sonra kalan 139 hasta çalışmaya dahil edildi.

Olguların sitopatolojik değerlendirmeleri, bilgilere kör ve

tek bir patolog tarafından yapıldı. Hastalara ait preparatlar histokimyasal olarak May-Grünwald-Giemsa, Papanicolaou (PAP) boyama ve sıvı bazlı sitoloji yöntemiyle (ThinPrep) ve oluşturulan hücre bloklarından elde edilen H&E boyalı kesitlerin ışık mikroskopunda incelenmesiyle değerlendirildi. Sitolojik materyaller “Benign Sitoloji (BS)” ve “Malign Sitoloji (MS)”olarak sınıflandırıldı. Değerlendirmeler sonucunda tüm olgular ALN metastazı var /yok olarak sınıflandırılmıştır. Malign sitoloji tanısı alan olgularda metastaz boyutu için hastanın takip eden sentinel lenf nodu ve/veya aksiller diseksiyon materyalindeki boyut esas alındı. Metastaz tespit edilen hastaların metastaz boyutları 2 mm'nin altındaysa mikrometastaz, 2 mm ve üzeri boyutta ise makrometastaz olarak sınıflandırıldı.¹⁴

Bu çalışma lokal Klinik Araştırmalar Etik Kurulu tarafından 09 nolu sayı ile 21.10.2020 tarihinde onaylanmıştır ve yazarlar arasında herhangi bir çıkar çalışması bulunmamaktadır.

2. MR Görüntüleme Tekniği

Hastaların meme MRG incelemeleri kliniğimizde bulunan 1,5 Tesla MR cihazı (Magnetom AERA, Siemens, Erlangen, Germany) ile gerçekleştirildi. Menstrüel siklusun meme parankimi üzerindeki etkilerinden kaçınmak için premenopozal dönemdeki hastaların meme MRG tetkiki siklusun 7–14. günleri arasında yapıldı. İnceleme, 8 kanallı yüzeyel meme sargısı kullanılarak, 32 cm görüntüleme alanında ve hasta pron pozisyonunda iken gerçekleştirildi.

İntravenöz kontrast madde enjeksiyonu için işlem öncesi hastalara antekubital damar yolu açıldı. Çekim esnasında 0,1-0,2 mmol/kg dozda gadolinyum içeren (Meglumin Gadoterat) kontrast madde kullanıldı. Rutin meme MRG inceleme protokolü olarak tüm hastalarda T1A, T2A ve yağ baskılı görüntüler alındı. Daha sonra kontrast madde enjekte edilerek 60 sn aralıklarla 6 kez tekrarlanan T1A dinamik görüntüler elde olundu. Son olarak ise b=50, b=200 ve b=800 sn/mm² değerleri ile diffüzyon ağırlıklı görüntüleme (DAG) gerçekleştirildi. Meme MRG protokolünün

detayları tablo-1'de açıklandı.

3.MR Görüntülerinin Değerlendirilmesi

Hastaların MR görüntüleri biri 10 yıldan fazla deneyime sahip uzman ve diğeri uzmanlık öğrencisi olan iki radyolog tarafından değerlendirildi.

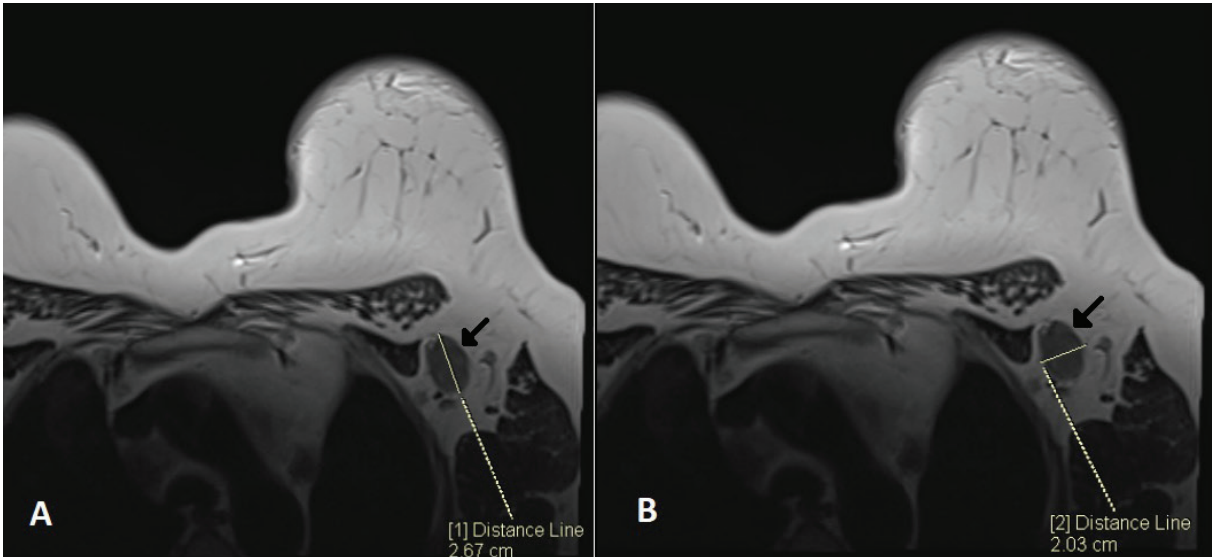
Dinamik meme MR incelemede ALN'yi patolojik görünümü olarak değerlendirme kriterleri olarak önceki çalışmalara benzer şekilde; yağlı hilus kaybı, anteroposterior çap artışı, anteroposterior çap/transvers çap artışı, yuvarlak şekil, asimetric kortikal kalınlaşma, kontur düzensizliği, perifokal ödem yer alıyordu.¹⁵⁻¹⁸

Biyopsi yapılan lenf nodu ile MRG'de üzerinde çalışılan lenf nodunu eşleştirmek için, biyopsi öncesi ve biyopsi sırasında aksillanın yapılmış ayrıntılı ultrason rapor ve görüntüleri kullanıldı. MR değerlendirme aşamasında aksiller bölgede multipl sayıda patolojik görünümü lenf bezi tespit edilmesi durumunda daha önce yapılan çalışmalara benzer şekilde biyopsi yapılan lenf beziyle eşleşebilmek için en büyük boyutlu lenf bezi çalışmaya dahil edildi.^{19,20} Bu aşamaya kadarki incelemeler her iki radyoloğun konsensusu ile gerçekleştirildi. Bu paragrafta tanımlanacak olan incelemeler ise her iki radyolog tarafından ayrı ayrı gerçekleştirilmiş ve sonrasında gözlemciler arasındaki uyum araştırıldı. Olguların patolojik görünümdeki aksiller lenf bezlerinin T2A incelemede yağlı hilus özellikleri, uzun aks ve kısa aks boyutları, transvers çap / anteroposterior çap oranları not edildi (Resim 1). ADC görüntüleme iki boyutlu ROI yardımıyla patolojik görünümü ALN etrafında manuel olarak ilgi alanı oluşturuldu, lenf bezinin ADC değerleri not edildi (Resim 2). Prekontrast T1A görüntüleme ve postkontrast 6. dakikada elde olunan geç fazlarda iki boyutlu ROI yardımıyla ALN etrafında manuel olarak ilgi alanı oluşturuldu, lenf bezinin pre ve postkontrast T1A değerleri not edildi (Resim 2). Parsiyel volüm etkisini azaltmak için ROI sınırları sadece lezyonu kapsayacak şekilde dikkatle çizildi.

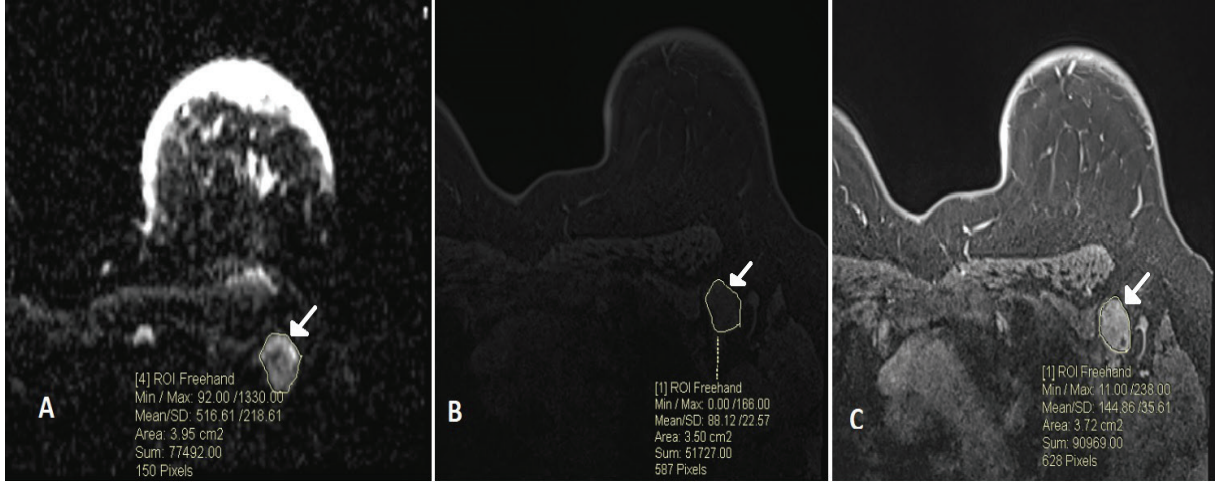
Tablo 1: Meme MRG protokolüne ait parametreler

Sekans	Yağ baskılama tekniği	Kesit kalınlığı	Anatomik düzlem	Parametreler
TSE T1A	Yok	4 mm	Aksiyel	TR:476 msn TE:11 msn matriks:384x297 NEX:1
TIRM T2A	Var	4 mm	Aksiyel	TR:2250 msn TE:56 msn matriks:384x270 NEX:1
TSE T2A	Yok	4 mm	Aksiyel	TR:5350 msn TE:76 msn matriks:320x217 NEX:2
SPAIR T1A	Yok	2 mm	Aksiyel ve Sagittal	TR:4.53 msn TE:1.82 msn matriks:416x313 NEX:1 Flip angle:10°
DAG	Yok	4 mm	Aksiyel	TR:6400 msn TE:66 msn matriks:220x84 NEX:2

TSE : Turbo spin echo
TIRM: Turbo inversion recovery magnitude
SPAIR: Spectral attenuated inversion recovery
DAG: Diffüzyon ağırlıklı görüntüleme
NEX : number of excitation
TR: time to repeat
TE: echo time



Resim 1: Meme MRG'de T2 ağırlıklı görüntüleme aksiller bölgede izlenen patolojik görünümümlü lenf bezinin boyut ölçümleri. A:T2 ağırlıklı görüntüleme aksiyel planda patolojik görünümümlü aksiller lenf bezinin uzun aks boyutu ölçümü (siyah ok). B:T2 ağırlıklı görüntüleme aksiyel planda patolojik görünümümlü aksiller lenf bezinin kısa aks boyutu ölçümü (siyah ok).



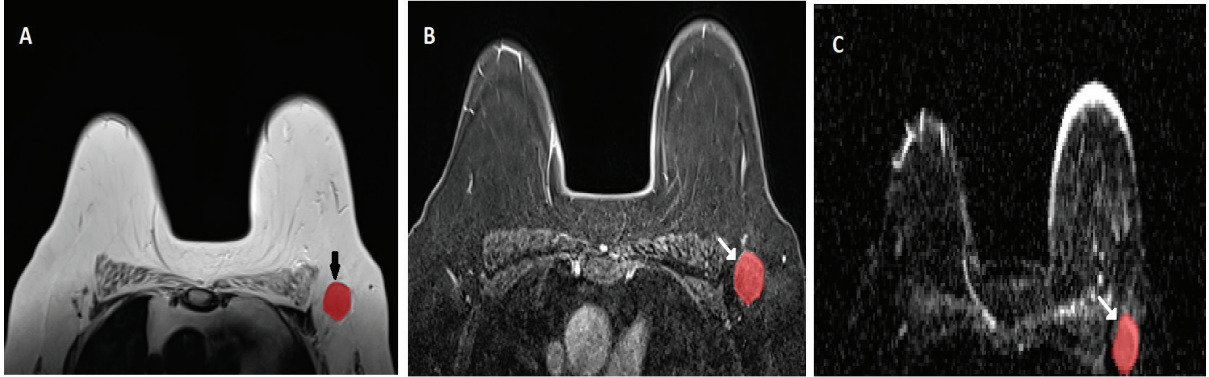
Resim 2: Meme MRG'de diffüzyon ağırlıklı görüntüleme ADC sekansta, kontrastsız T1 ağırlıklı görüntüleme ve postkontrast 6. dakikada elde olunan T1 ağırlıklı görüntüleme patolojik görünümü aksiller lenf bezinin ADC, kontrastsız T1A ve postkontrast T1A değerlerinin ölçülmesi. A: ADC görüntüleme iki boyutlu ROI yardımıyla patolojik görünümü ALN etrafında manuel olarak ilgi alanı oluşturularak lenf bezinin ADC değerinin ölçülmesi (beyaz ok). B: Kontrastsız T1 ağırlıklı görüntüleme iki boyutlu ROI yardımıyla patolojik görünümü ALN etrafında manuel olarak ilgi alanı oluşturularak lenf bezinin ADC değerinin ölçülmesi (beyaz ok). C: Kontrastsız T1 ağırlıklı görüntüleme iki boyutlu ROI yardımıyla patolojik görünümü ALN etrafında manuel olarak ilgi alanı oluşturularak lenf bezinin ADC değerinin ölçülmesi (beyaz ok).

4.MRG Tekstür Analizi Prosedürü

MR görüntülerini değerlendirme aşamasında T2A, post-kontrast T1A görüntüleme ve diffüzyon ağırlıklı görüntüleme (DWI) ADC sekanlarda patolojik görünümü olarak belirlenen lenf bezlerinin yer aldığı aksiyel kesitler belirlendi ve DICOM formatında 256x256 matris olarak hazırlandı. Görüntüler, Lodz Teknik Üniversitesi Elektronik Enstitüsünde Szczypinski ve arkadaşları tarafından geliştirilen ücretsiz MaZda 4.6 yazılım programına iki boyutlu (2D) tekstür analizi yapılması amacıyla yüklendikten sonra iki boyutlu ROI yardımıyla aksiller lenf bezi etrafında manuel olarak çizilen ilgi alanı oluşturuldu (Resim 3). ROI belirlenmesi iki radyolog tarafından gerçekleştirildi ve konsensus oluşturularak parsiyel volüm etkisini azaltmak için ROI sınırları sadece lezyonu kapsayacak şekilde dikkatle çizildi. Yazılım programı tarafından otomatik olarak yapılan analizler sonucu her bir vaka için çeşitli tekstür özellikleri elde edildi ve rapor çıktısı alındı. Dört yönlü analizlerde önceki çalışmalarda olduğu gibi bir fark bek-

lenmediği için bu değerler tek parametreye indirildi.²¹

MRG görüntüleri DICOM formatında hazırlandıktan sonra MaZda 4.6 yazılım programı ile yapılan iki boyutlu analiz sonucunda her bir olgu için histogram temelli 4 özellik (ortalama parlaklık/ "mean brightness", değişkenlik/ "variance", çarpıklık/ "skewness", sivrilik/ "kurtosis") ve İkinci düzey tekstür analizlerinden gri düzey eş oluşturma matrisinden 11 adet özellik (açısal ikinci moment/ "angular second moment", kontrast/ "contrast", korelasyon/ "correlation", kareler toplamı/ "sum of squares", çeşitli ortalamalar/ "various averages", değişkenlik/ "variance", ters momentler/ "inverse moments", entropi özellikleri) elde edildi. Literatürdeki güncel MR tekstür analiz çalışmaları incelenerek tekrar edilebilirlik ve güvenilirlik açısından en sık kullanılan ve bizim de bu çalışmada kullandığımız tekstür parametreleri Tablo 2'de özetlendi.^{9,22}



Resim 3: Patolojik görünümlü aksiller lenf bezi etrafında MRG tekstür analizi amacıyla manuel olarak çizilen iki boyutlu ilgi alanı oluşturulması. A: T2 ağırlıklı görüntülemelerde aksiyel planda sol aksiller bölgede yer alan patolojik görünümlü lenf bezi etrafında manuel olarak çizilen iki boyutlu ilgi alanı oluşturulması (siyah ok). B: Postkontrast 6. dakikada elde olunan T1 ağırlıklı görüntülemelerde aksiyel planda sol aksiller bölgede yer alan patolojik görünümlü lenf bezi etrafında manuel olarak çizilen iki boyutlu ilgi alanı oluşturulması (beyaz ok). C: Diffüzyon ağırlıklı görüntülemelerde ADC sekansta aksiyel planda sol aksiller bölgede yer alan patolojik görünümlü lenf bezi etrafında manuel olarak çizilen iki boyutlu ilgi alanı oluşturulması (beyaz ok).

Tablo 2: Çalışmada kullanılan tekstür parametreleri ve tanımları	
Parametre	Tanım
Area	Histogramın yüz ölçümü,alanı
Mean	Ortalama piksel değeri, intensite, bir bölgenin parlaklığı
Variance(Standart varyasyon)	Ortalama gri skala değerinden sapmalar
Skewness	Histogramın asimetrisi, piksel dağılımının çarpıklığı
Kurtosis	Histogramın düzlüğü, piksel dağılımının büyüklüğü
Entropi	Gri skala dağılımının düzensizliği
Sum entropi	Görüntüdeki rastgelelik düzeyinin ölçümü

5. Çalışmanın İstatistiksel Değerlendirilmesi

Çalışma sonucu elde edilen veriler veri tabanına kaydedilerek, istatistiksel analizler SPSS 22 paket programı kullanılarak yapıldı. Çalışmada toplanan tanımlayıcı analizler sayısal değişkenler için ortalama, ortanca, standart sapma, en küçük – en büyük değer; kategorik değişkenler için sayı, oran, yüzde kullanılarak sunuldu. Verilerin normal dağılımı uyumu Kolmogorov Smirnov ile test edildi. Gruplar arası karşılaştırmalarda, değişken özelliğine uygun olarak Ki Kare, Student t ve Mann Whitney U testleri kullanıldı. Posthoc analizler Mann-Whitney U testi kullanılarak yapıldı ve Bonferroni düzeltmesi kullanılarak değerlendirildi. Lezyonların benign/malign ayırımı için belirlene-

cek parametrelerin tanısal karar verdirici özellikleri alıcı işletim karakteristiği (Receiver Operating Characteristic ,ROC) eğrisi analizi ile incelendi. P değerinin 0,05 'in altında olduğu değerler istatistiksel olarak anlamlı kabul edildi. Gözlemciler arası uyumu değerlendirmek için Kappa istatistiği kullanıldı ve Kappa değerleri Landis ve Koch değerlerine göre kategorize edildi:

- 0,81-1,00; neredeyse mükemmel uyum
- 0,61-0,80; önemli uyum
- 0,41-0,60; ılımlı uyum
- 0,21-0,40; adil uyum
- 0,00-0,20; zayıf uyum.23-25

BULGULAR

Çalışmaya toplam 139 hasta alındı. Çalışmaya dahil edilen hastaların tamamı kadın cinsiyette olup yaş ortalaması $52,95 \pm 12,42$ yıldır (29 – 85 yıl). Hastaların patoloji sonuçları ve MRG özellikleri tablo 3'te yer almaktadır. Patolojik görünümdeki aksiller lenf bezine ait değişkenlerin değerlendirilmesinde gözlemciler arası Kappa uyum dereceleri tablo 4'te gösterildi.

Tablo 3: Hastaların demografik ve klinik verileri, patoloji sonuçları ve MRG özellikleri	
	Ortanca(min-max)
Yas	52(29-85)
Transvers(Tr) çap	14,9(8-38)
Anteroposterio(AP) çap	9,8(5-25,9)
Tr/AP çap oranı	1,45(1-2,76)
Prekontrast T1A	126,66(22,65-272,88)
	n(%)
Patoloji	
Benign	42(30,2)
Malign	97(69,8)
Lenf Bezi Metastaz	
Mikrometastaz	17(17,5)
Makrometastaz	80(82,5)
T2A yağlı hilus	
Seçilen	56(40,3)
Seçilemeyen	83(59,7)

Tablo 4: Gözlemciler arası Kappa uyum dereceleri	
Değişken	Kappa değeri (%95 CI)
T2A yağlı hilus özellikleri	0,816 (0,801-0,832)
Uzun aks/kısa aks boyutlarının değerlendirilmesi	0,736 (0,720-0,749)
Transvers çap/Anteroposterior çap oranının değerlendirilmesi	0,732 (0,721-0,744)
ADC değeri	0,740 (0,731-0,749)
Kontrastsız T1A değeri	0,736 (0,720-0,749)
Postkontrast T1A değeri	0,818 (0,802-0,835)
Tekstür analizi T2A özellikleri	0,734 (0,742-0,749)
Tekstür analizi ADC özellikleri	0,736 (0,720-0,749)
Tekstür analizi postkontrast T1A özellikleri	0,732 (0,721-0,744)

Olguların patoloji sonuçları incelendiğinde %69.8'inin (n=97) malign, %30.2'sinin (n=42) benign olduğu görüldü (Tablo 3). Aksiller lenf nodu biyopsi sonucuna göre benign grupta yer alan olguların primer meme lezyonlarının 22'sinin patoloji sonucunun benign olduğu, 1 olgunun duktal karsinoma in situ, 19 olgunun ise erken evre meme kanseri tanısı aldığı tespit edilmiştir. Erken evre meme CA tanısı alan hastaların cerrahi operasyonları sırasında yapılan SLNB yöntemi ile çıkarılan lenf bezlerinde metastaz saptanmamıştır. Aksiller lenf nodu biyopsi sonucuna göre malign grupta yer alan olgulardan %82.5'inde (n=80) makrometastaz, %17.5'inde (n=17) mikrometastaz izlendi.

Olguların T2A MR görüntülerinin değerlendirmesinde %40,3'ünde (n=56) lenf nodunun yağlı hilusu seçilebilirken, %59,7'sinde (n=83) lenf nodunun yağlı hilusu seçilememekteydi (Tablo 3). Benign ve malign lenf nodları arasında T2A yağlı hilus varlığı açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı farklılık vardı (p=0,008). Benign lenf nodlarında T2A yağlı hilus varlığı %57,1 iken malign lenf nodlarında %33'tü (Tablo 5). Diğer MR parametrelerinde (transvers/anteroposterior çap oranı, kontrastsız ve postkontrast T1A değerleri) malign ve benign grup arasında anlamlı farklılık saptanmadı (Tablo 6).

MR tekstür analizi sonuçlarının değerlendirilmesinde; benign ve malign grupta T2 area ve T2 skewness değerleri arasında anlamlı farklılık saptandı (sırasıyla p=0,006; 0,029). Malign grupta T2 area ve T2 skewness ortanca değerleri benign gruptan daha yüksekti (Tablo 6). Benign ve malign gruplarda ADC area ve ADC kurtosis değerleri arasında anlamlı farklılık saptandı (sırasıyla p=0,027;0,005). Malign grupta ADC area ve ADC kurtosis ortanca değerleri benign gruptan daha yüksekti (Tablo 6). Benign ve malign hastalarda postkontrast T1 area, postkontrast T1 variance ve postkontrast T1 kurtosis değerleri arasında anlamlı farklılık saptandı (sırasıyla p=0,036;0,010; <0,001). Malign hastalarda postkontrast T1 area, postkontrast T1 variance ortanca değeri benign hastalardan daha yüksek-

Tablo 5: T2A yağlı hilus özellikleri ile patolojik alt grupların karşılaştırılması

	Benign	Malign	p
	n(%)	n(%)	
T2 yağlı hilus varlığı			
Var	24(57,1)	32(33)	0,008
Yok	18(42,9)	65(67)	
	Makrometastaz	Mikrometastaz	
	n(%)	n(%)	
T2 yağlı hilus varlığı			
Var	21(26,3)	11(64,7)	0,002
Yok	59(73,8)	6(35,3)	

Tablo 6: MRG özellikleri ve MR TA ölçümlerinin patolojik tanıya göre karşılaştırılması

	Benign	Malign	p
	Ortanca(min-max)	Ortanca(min-max)	
Tr/AP cap orani	1,49(1-2,76)	1,4(1-2,75)	0,434
Prekontrast T1A	129,63(22,65-231,72)	121,82(49,85-272,88)	0,117
Postkontrast T1A	211,46(24,98-365,71)	201,16(75,32-450)	0,106
T2A			
area	109,5(18-1555)	148(38-1142)	0,006
mean	13,02(1,19-135,2)	14,19(1,03-897,12)	0,681
variance	23,4(1,41-92,44)	40,13(1,08-99,96)	0,072
skewness	0,46(-11-15)	0,73(-13-25)	0,029
kurtosis	-0,14(-12-37)	0,07(-14-73)	0,201
sum entropi	12,88(0,91-17,25)	13,56(0,81-16,44)	0,945
entropi	19,03(1,47-173,07)	19,2(1,42-24,01)	0,951
ADC			
area	50,50(26-185)	62(11-224)	0,027
mean	13,87(1,39-161)	15,18(1,23-201)	0,582
variance	41,58(2,13-7574,01)	40,74(1,06-9333,4)	0,880
skewness	0,04(-11,55-0,59)	-0,12(-13,26-15,13)	0,047
kurtosis	-12,32(-133,58-24,58)	10,45(-766-16,91)	0,005
sum entropi	14,09(1,18-137,25)	14,19(0,7-176,95)	0,973
entropi	17,96(13,19-169,36)	18,14(0,83-180,61)	0,980
Postkontrast T1A			
area	183,50(74-1051)	254(47-1052)	0,036
mean	12,85(1,11-104,44)	13,26(1,09-169,86)	0,183
variance	27,89(1,78-558)	18,68(1,24-1021,25)	0,010
skewness	-0,33(-0,9-0,4)	0,35(-15,77-0,85)	0,330
kurtosis	-0,8(-101,7-0,4)	-0,37(-13,25-39,82)	<0,001
sum entropi	16,54(1,55-161,97)	16,27(1,54-18,74)	0,417
entropi	22,91(2,13-27,22)	23,01(2,13-233,41)	0,670

Tablo 7: MR tekstür analizi ölçümlerinin ve MR özelliklerinin makro-mikro metastaz durumuna göre karşılaştırılması			
	Mikrometastaz	Makrometastaz	p
	Ortanca(min-max)	Ortanca(min-max)	
Tr AP cap oranı	1,6(1,15-2,75)	1,37(1-2,64)	0,178
Prekontrast T1A	149,43(73,82-272,88)	120,9(49,85-211,54)	0,048
T2A			
area	80(38-154)	171(67-1142)	<0,001
skewness	0,21(-26,86)	0,85(-26,01)	0,000
kurtosis	-0,73(-40,06)	0,17(-88,72)	0,002
ADC			
area	37(20-87)	75,5(11-224)	<0,001
mean	16,3(7,2-201)	14,32(1,23-190,5)	0,014
kurtosis	-12,99(-17,62)	-0,98(-782,91)	0,015
sumentropi	12,9(0,7-15,48)	14,28(0,75-176,95)	0,002
entropi	16,26(0,83-18,88)	18,57(0,87-180,61)	0,001
Postkontrast T1A			
area	126(47-394)	283,5(77-152)	<0,001
kurtosis	-0,89(-13,39)	-0,12(-52,02)	0,001

Tablo 8: Lezyonların benign-malign ayırımında kullanılabilecek prediktif parametrelerin ROC eğrisi verileri					
Parametreler	AUC (%95 CI)	p	Kesim değeri	Sensitivite	Spesifisite
T2A area	0,647 (0,553-0,741)	0,006	124,5	%60,8	%61,9
T2A skewness	0,617 (0,519-0,715)	0,029	0,55	%60,8	%57,1
ADC area	0,618 (0,523-0,714)	0,027	50,5	%61,9	%50
ADC skewness	0,607 (0,512-0,701)	0,047	0,03	%63,9	%54,8
ADC kurtosis	0,652 (0,555-0,748)	0,005	-12	%62,9	%61,9
Postkontrast T1A area	0,612 (0,516-0,709)	0,036	199	%59,8	%54,8
Postkontrast T1A variance	0,637 (0,540-0,735)	0,010	24,17	%61,9	%61,9
Postkontrast T1A kurtosis	0,702 (0,611-0,793)	<0,001	-0,58	%66	%64,3

ken, benign hastalarda postkontrast T1 kurtosis ortanca değerleri malign hastalardan daha yüksekti (Tablo 6).

Makrometastaz ve mikrometastaz olan malign lenf nodları arasında T2A yağlı hilus varlığı açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı farklılık vardı ($p=0,002$). Mikrometastaz olan lenf nodlarında T2A yağlı hilus varlığı %64,7 iken makrometastaz olan lenf nodlarında %26,3'tü (Tablo 5). Malign grupta yer alan olguların mikrometastaz ve makrometastaz durumunu ayırt etmede anlamlı olan MR özellikleri prekontrast T1 ağırlıklı görüntülerde ortalama sinyal intensitesi ($p=0,048$), MR tekstür parametrelerinden T2 ağırlıklı görüntülerde Area, Skewness, Kurtosis; difüzyon ağırlıklı görüntülerde ADC sekanslarda Area, Mean, Kurtosis, Sumentropi, Entropi; postkontrast T1 ağırlıklı görüntülerde Area ve Kurtosis değerleri olduğu görüldü ($p<0,001-0,015$) (Tablo 7).

MR tekstür analiz parametrelerinden T2 area, T2 skewness, ADC area, ADC skewness, ADC kurtosis, DCE area, DCE variance ve DCE kurtosis değerlerinin benign ve malign lenf nodlarının ayırımı açısından prediktif tanısal değerini belirlemek için ROC analizi yapıldı. Yapılan analiz sonuçlarına ilişkin eğri altında kalan alan (AUC), sensitivite, spesifite ve kesim değerleri Tablo 8'de belirtildi.

TARTIŞMA

ALN metastazı, meme kanseri olan hastalarda prognozu etkileyen ana faktörlerden birisi olmakla birlikte, saptanması hasta yönetimi, tedavisi açısından önem taşımaktadır. Çalışmamızdaki olguların patoloji sonuçları incelendiğinde olguların 3'te 2'sinden fazlasının (%69,8) malign olduğu görüldü. Ha ve arkadaşlarının meme MRG'de aksiller lenf bezine yönelik tanısal performansı araştırdıkları çalışmada 487 hasta çalışmaya dahil edilmiş ve bu hastaların histopatolojik değerlendirme sonuçları %14'ü ($n=68$) malign, %86'sı ($n=419$) benign şekilde sonuçlanmıştır.²⁶ Zaiton ve arkadaşlarının yeni teşhis edilen meme CA'da aksiller lenf bezlerini tahmin etmede difüzyon ağırlıklı MRG'nin tanısal performansını araştırdıkları çalışmada,

çalışmaya dahil edilen 208 lenf nodunun histopatolojik değerlendirme sonuçları %60,5 ($n=126$ malign), %39,5 ($n=82$) benign olarak sonuçlanmıştır.²⁷ Meme radyolojisi ve girişimsel radyoloji bölümümüzde meme CA kuşkusu olup sadece aksillada asimetric korteks kalınlığı, kısa çap artımı, yağlı hilus seçilememesi gibi metastaz açısından kuşku taşıyan lenf bezlerine İİAB-KİB yapılmış, tipik reaktif görünümde olan lenf bezlerine ise biyopsi işlemi yapılmamıştır. Buna bağlı olarak aksiller lenf bezi biyopsisi olan hastalar çalışma grubumuzu oluşturduğundan, aksiller metastaz saptanmayan hasta sayısının literatüre göre düşük olduğu düşünülmüştür.

Çalışmamızda, T2A görüntüde yağlı hilus varlığı açısından yapılan değerlendirmede benign ve malign gruplar arasında anlamlı farklılık saptandı (%57,1-%33). Zaiton ve arkadaşlarının yaptığı çalışmada da çalışmamıza benzer oranlar elde edilmiştir.³¹ Arslan ve arkadaşlarının yaptığı çalışmada metastatik lenf bezlerinin % 40'ında yağlı hilus görülürken, tüm reaktif lenf bezlerinde yağlı hilusun seçilebildiği bildirilmiştir.²⁸ Mortellaro ve arkadaşları T2 STIR görüntüler üzerinden yaptıkları çalışmada yağlı hilus kaybı ile metastatik lenf bezleri arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu sonucuna varmış ve çalışmalarının bu ilişki ile ilgili ilk rapor olduklarını bildirmişlerdir.²⁹

Benign-malign grup arasında MRG TA özelliklerinden; skewness, ADC area ve kurtosis, postkontrast T1A area, variance ve kurtosis değerlerinde anlamlı T2A area ve farklılık saptandı. Fusco ve arkadaşlarının yağ baskılı postkontrast T1 ağırlıklı sekanslarda metastatik ve metastatik olmayan aksiller lenf bezlerinin morfolojik özelliklerini değerlendirdikleri Circularity, Compactness, Irregularity, Diameter, Rectangularity, Radial length, Volume, Smoothness, Curvature, Roughness, Sphericity, Eccentricity, Surface, Spiculation, Convexity, Entropy, Elongation parametrelerini içeren radiomics çalışmasında Circularity dışındaki tüm parametrelerin medyanı, iki grup arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı farklılık gösterdiği bildirilmiştir. Çalışmada her bir parametre için ROC eğrileri

oluşturularak parametrelerin cut-off değerleri belirtilmiş ve metastatik lenf düğümleri ve metastatik olmayan lenf düğümleri arasındaki en iyi ayrımı sağlayan morfolojik parametrelerin Compactness, Curvature, Radial length, Roughness, Smoothness, ve Spiculation olduğu bildirilmiştir.⁹ Tanımlanan parametreler bizim çalışmamızda da anlamlı sonuçlanan Area, Skewness, Kurtosis, Entropy parametreleri ile benzerlik göstermektedir (Tablo 6). Schacht ve arkadaşlarının kontrastlı T1 ağırlıklı sekanslarda metastatik ve benign ALN'leri ayırt etmek için otomatik olarak çizilen ROI'ye dayalı radiomic çalışmasında anlamlı bulunan morfolojik parametreler Radyal gradient varyansı, Sphericity/Circularity; tekstür parametreleri ise Correlation, Difference in variance, Energy olarak bildirilmiştir. Bu analize dayalı olarak metastatik lenf bezlerinin radyal gradyan histogramında artan varyans, artan dairesellik, azalmış enerji (daha az homojen görünüm), varyansta azalmış fark, artan korelasyon parametrelerine sahip olma olasılığının daha yüksek olduğu belirtilmiştir.³⁰ Tanımlanan parametreler bizim çalışmamızda da anlamlı sonuçlanan Skewness, Kurtosis, Variance parametreleri ile benzerlik göstermektedir (Tablo 6).

Metastazlar, makrometastazlar (>2 mm), mikrometastazlar (0.2-2 mm) ve izole edilmiş tümör hücre kümeleri (bir bölümden <0.2 mm veya <200 kanser hücresi) olarak sınıflandırılır.¹⁴ Bu küçük metastatik birikintilerin klinik önemi belirsizliğini korumaktadır. Artan nodal yükün orantılı olarak hasta sağlığını azaltması nedeniyle erken invaziv meme kanserinde nodal metastazın en iyi nasıl yönetileceğine dair sorular gündeme gelmiştir.³¹ Malign grupta yer alan olgularda; makrometastaz ve mikrometastaz durumunu ayırt etmede subgruplar arasında MRG özelliklerinden T2A yağlı hilus varlığı, prekontrast T1A ortalama sinyal intensitelerinde; MRG TA özelliklerinden; T2A area, skewness, kurtosis, ADC area, mean, kurtosis, sumentropi, entropi, postkontrast T1A area ve kurtosis değerlerinde anlamlı farklılık saptandı. Meme kanseri tanısı olan hastalarda mikrometastazların prognostik önemine yönelik tartışmalar zıtlıklar içermekte olup hala tartışmalıdır. Mil-

lis ve arkadaşları yaptıkları çalışmada mikrometastazların prognostik önemi olmadığını söylemektedirler.³² Reed ve arkadaşlarının geniş hasta sayısı ile sentinel lenf nodu taraması yaptıkları çalışmada, uzak nüks oranlarını sentinel lenf nodu negatif olan grupta %6, mikrometastaz saptanan grupta %14, sentinel lenf nodu pozitif olan grupta %21 olarak saptamış ve sentinel lenf nodunda mikrometastaz saptanan hastalarda aksiller lenf nodu diseksiyonu ve daha agresiv adjuvan terapi uygulanabileceğini bildirmişlerdir.³³ Radyolojik görüntüleme yöntemleri ile mikrometastazların saptanabilmesi SLNB gerekliliğini ve buna bağlı ortaya çıkabilecek yan etkileri azaltabilmesi nedeniyle büyük önem taşımaktadır. Mikrometastaz düzeyindeki nodal yayılmaların radyolojik olarak ve standart hematoksilin-eozin boyalı preparatlarda histomorfolojik olarak tanınması oldukça sınırlı iken biz çalışmamızda noninvaziv, pratik bir yöntem olarak dinamik meme MR özellikleri ve MRG TA özellikleri parametrelerinin tanıya faydalı olduğunu bulduk.

Çalışmamızın bazı sınırlılıkları vardır. Çalışma retrospektif olarak gerçekleşmiştir, çalışmanın retrospektif karakterine bağlı olarak biyopsi yapılan lenf nodu ile MR'da patolojik olarak görüntülenen lenf nodunu eşleştirmede bazı olgularda belirsizlikler mevcuttu. Bu sorunu, biyopsi işleminde en büyük çapa sahip malign görünümlü lenf nodundan işlemin yapıldığını teyid edip, MRG'de de en büyük çaplı malign görünümlü lenf nodundan ölçümler yaparak giderdik. Diğer bir sınırlama, küçük lezyonların düşük voksel sayıları nedeniyle tekstür analizinin güvenilirliğinin azalmasıdır. Piksel sayıları ve intensite farklarının daha az olması lezyon içi heterojenitenin hesaplanmasında yanlışlıklara neden olabilmektedir. Çalışmada ROI'nin manuel olarak çizilmesi ve bunun bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıkan subjektiflik önemli diğer bir kısıtlılıktır.

SONUÇ

Manyetik Rezonans görüntüleme bazlı tekstür analizi giderek artan sıklıkta kullanılan bir uygulama olmasına rağmen literatürde aksiller lenf bezine yönelik MR teks-

tür analizini araştıran yeterli çalışma yoktur. Noninvaziv ve tekrarlanabilir bir yöntem olan MRG TA, metastatik ALN'leri preoperatif dönemde karakterize etmede diğer MRG yöntemlerine katkı sağlamaktadır.

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Ankilozan Spondilit Hastalarında Hastalık Aktivitesi ile Sistemik İnflamasyon İndeksi ve Trombosit Albumin Oranı Arasındaki İlişki

The relationship Between Disease Activity and Systemic Inflammation Index and Platelet Albumin Ratio in Patients with Ankylosing Spondylitis

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Öz

Amaç	Sistemik İnflamasyon indeksi (SII) ve trombosit albümin oranı (PAR) inflamasyonu değerlendirmek için öne sürülen yeni biyobelirteçlerdir. Çalışmamızda Ankilozan Spondilit (AS) hastalarında hastalık aktivitesi ile SII ve PAR arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemeyi amaçladık.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	AS'li 79 hasta ile 79 sağlıklı kontrol retrospektif olarak değerlendirildi. Katılımcıların demografik, klinik ve laboratuvar verileri poliklinik verileri incelenerek hastane bilgi sistemi üzerinden kayıt edildi. AS grubunda hastalık aktivite durumu Bath Ankilozan Spondilit Hastalık Aktivite İndeksi (BASDAI) skoru hesaplanarak tayin edildi. BASDAI skoru ≥ 4 olanlar aktif hasta olarak kabul edildi. Aktif hastalığı olan AS hastaları ile remisyonunda olan hastalar SII ve PAR açısından karşılaştırıldı.
Bulgular	AS grubunun yaş ortalaması $42,53 \pm 6,60$, sağlıklı grubun $41,37 \pm 10,86$ yılı ($p=0,460$). AS grubunda 49 (%62,0), sağlıklı grupta 35 (44,3) katılımcı erkekti ($p=0,026$). AS grubunda sağlıklı gruba göre SII, PAR ve C-reaktif protein albümin oranı (CAR) değerlerinin istatistiksel olarak anlamlı oranda daha yüksek olduğu tespit edildi (sırasıyla $p<0,001$, $p=0,037$, $p=0,046$). AS hastalarının şikayet süresi ortanca $156,0$ [130,0], tanı süresi $96,0$ [85,0] aydı. BASDAI skoruna göre 42 (%54,5) hasta aktif, 35 (%45,5) hasta remisyon dönemindeydi. CRP ve CAR değerleri aktif dönemde olan hastalarda remisyonunda olanlara göre istatistiksel olarak anlamlı oranda daha yüksek tespit edilirken (sırasıyla $p=0,035$, $p=0,038$); SII ve PAR düzeyleri arasında anlamlı fark saptanamadı ($p>0,05$).
Sonuç	AS hastalarında sağlıklı kontroller ile karşılaştırıldığında SII ve PAR değerlerinin artmış olduğu tespit edilirken, beklenenin aksine hastalık aktivitesi ile SII ve PAR değerleri arasında herhangi bir ilişki tespit edilemedi.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Ankilozan Spondilit; sistemik inflamasyon indeksi; trombosit albümin oranı; C-reaktif protein albümin oranı

Abstract

Introduction	Systemic Inflammation index (SII) and platelet albumin ratio (PAR) are new biomarkers proposed to evaluate inflammation. In our study, we aimed to examine the relationship between disease activity and SII and PAR in patients with Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS).
Materials and Methods	79 patients with AS and 79 healthy controls were evaluated retrospectively. Demographic, clinical and laboratory data of the participants were recorded through the hospital information system by examining the outpatient clinic data. Disease activity status in the AS group was determined by calculating the Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Index (BASDAI) score. Those with a BASDAI score of ≥ 4 were considered active patients. AS patients with active disease and patients in remission were compared in terms of SII and PAR.
Results	The mean age of the AS group was 42.53 ± 6.60 , and the healthy group was 41.37 ± 10.86 years ($p=0.460$). 49 (62.0%) participants in the AS group and 35 (44.3) participants in the healthy group were male ($p=0.026$). SII, PAR and C-reactive protein albumin ratio (CAR) values were found to be statistically significantly higher in the AS group compared to the healthy group ($p<0.001$, $p=0.037$, $p=0.046$, respectively). The median duration of complaints of AS patients was 156.0 [130.0], and the duration of diagnosis was 96.0 [85.0] months. According to the BASDAI score, 42 (54.5%) patients were active and 35 (45.5%) patients were in remission. While CRP and CAR values were found to be statistically significantly higher in patients in active period than in patients in remission ($p=0.035$, $p=0.038$, respectively); there was no significant difference between SII and PAR levels ($p>0.05$).
Conclusion	SII and PAR values were found to be increased in AS patients when compared to healthy controls. Contrary to expectations, no relationship was found between disease activity and SII and PAR values.
Keywords	Ankylosing Spondylitis; systemic inflammation index; platelet albumin ratio; C-reactive protein albumin ratio



GİRİŞ

Ankilozan Spondilit (AS) esas olarak aksiyel iskelet ve sakroiliak eklemi tutan, etiyolojisi bilinmeyen ve progresif seyreden kronik inflamatuvar bir hastalıktır. Farklı ülkelerde prevalansı %0,32 ila %1,4 arasında değişirken, Türkiye'de %0,49'dur.^{1,2} Progresif seyreden hastalarda eklem füzyonu ile birlikte işlev bozukluğu meydana gelirken erken teşhis ve uygun tedavi ile yüksek oranlarda klinik remisyon elde edilebilir. Etiyolojisi halen daha belirsiz olmasına rağmen inflamasyonun hastalığın patogenezinde ve progresyonunda önemli rolü olduğu bilinmektedir.³ Hastalık aktivitesini tespit etmek, prognoz tahmini yapmak ve tedavi yanıtını değerlendirmek için inflamasyon derecesini düzenli aralıklarla takip etmek gerekir. Bunun için belirlenmiş standart bir laboratuvar yöntemi yoktur. Günümüzde sedimentasyon (ESR) ve c-reaktif protein (CRP) güvenilir ve maliyet etkin olmaları nedeniyle, yaygın olarak kullanılan inflamatuvar belirteçlerdir. Sensitivite ve spesifitelerinin düşük olması ve kısa süreli inflamatuvar aktiviteyi yansıtmaları bu testlerin dezavantajları arasında yer alır.^{4,5} Ayrıca aktif hastalığı olan hastaların ancak %70'inde bu belirteçlerin arttığı bildirilmiştir.⁶ ASAS/EULAR 2022 tedavi önerileri kılavuzunda aksiyel spondiloartritler için hastalık aktivitesini değerlendirmede en uygun yöntemin Ankilozan Spondilit Hastalık Aktivite İndeksi'nin (ASDAS) olduğu belirtilmiştir.⁷ Bath Ankilozan Spondilit Hastalık Aktivite İndeksi (BASDAI) de pratikte en sık kullanılan, geçerliliği ve güvenilirliği kanıtlanmış diğer bir yöntemdir.⁸ Fakat ikisi de uygulaması zor ve karmaşık olan subjektif yöntemlerdir. Manyetik rezonans görüntülemesinin hastalık progresyonu açısından öngörücü işlevine rağmen, takipte sınırlı yeri mevcuttur. Bu nedenle hastalık aktivitesini daha iyi yansıtan, sensitivitesi ve spesifitesi daha yüksek yeni biyobelirteçlerin belirlenmesi önemli hale gelmiştir.

Son zamanlarda yapılan çalışmalarda, basit, kolay ulaşılabilir ve düşük maliyetli olmaları nedeniyle, tam kan sayımı parametreleri birçok inflamatuvar hastalıkta yararlı biyobelirteçler olarak tanımlanmışlardır. Nötrofil-lenfosit

oranı (NLR) ve trombosit-lenfosit oranı (PLR) literatürde AS'de en sık bildirilen parametrelerdir.^{9,10} Son yapılan çalışmalarda CRP-albümin oranı (CAR) da inflamasyonu değerlendirmek için ortaya atılmış ve AS'li hastalarda hastalık aktivitesini tahmin etmede kullanılmıştır.¹¹ Bununla birlikte, bu biyobelirteçlerle hastalık aktivitesi arasındaki ilişkiyle alakalı çelişkili sonuçlar elde edilmiş, bu parametrelerin referansları ve yorumlanması konusunda da fikir birliğine varılamamıştır.⁹⁻¹¹

İnflamasyon trombositler için önemli bir stimülandır. Trombositlerin hemostaz ve trombozdaki rolleri dışında inflamasyondaki rolleri de son yıllarda artan ilgi odağı haline gelmiştir.¹² Çalışmalarda AS hastalarında aktif dönemde trombosit sayısında artış olduğu, tedavi ile birlikte remisyon döneminde trombosit sayısının azaldığı gösterilmiştir.¹³ Trombosit parametresini içeren sistemik inflamasyon indeksinin (SII) (trombosit sayısı × nötrofil sayısı/lenfosit sayısı) ve trombosit albumin oranının (PAR) onkolojik hastalarda prognoz tayininde kullanılabileceği bildirilmiştir.^{14,15} Biz de çalışmamızda AS hastalarında hastalık aktivitesi ile SII ve PAR arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemeyi amaçladık.

GEREÇ ve YÖNTEMLER

Sakarya Üniversitesi Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi Romatoloji Polikliniği'ne 01.09.2022-01.01.2023 tarihleri arasında kontrole gelen, Modifiye New York kriterleri esas alınarak tanı koyulan, 18 yaş üzeri, AS tanılı 79 hasta ile aynı tarihlerde Dahiliye polikliniğine sağlık taraması amacıyla başvuran 79 sağlıklı kontrol çalışmaya dahil edildi. 16 Hasta grubu en az 5 yıl süreyle AS nedeniyle Romatoloji Polikliniği'nde takipli, sigara ve alkol kullanmayan, AS dışında bilinen kronik hastalığı olmayan hastalardan oluşuyordu. Sağlıklı grup benzer demografik özelliklere sahip katılımcılardan oluşuyordu. Bilinen sigara, alkol kullanımı ve ek kronik hastalığı olan, AS nedeniyle takip süresi 5 yıldan kısa olan, son 3 ay içerisinde aktif enfeksiyon geçiren hastalar çalışma dışı bırakıldı. Bu çalışma Helsinki Deklarasyonu'na uygun olarak yapıldı. Bu çalışmada yer

alan tüm uygulamalar, Sakarya Üniversitesi Yerel Etik Kurulu tarafından 23.03.2023 tarihinde onaylandı (Etik kurul no: E-71522473-050.01.04-233231-97). Çalışmanın retrospektif olması nedeniyle bilgilendirilmiş onam formu alınmadı.

Demografik ve Laboratuvar Verileri

Katılımcıların yaş, cinsiyet, AS süresi, ilaç kullanımı gibi demografik, klinik ve laboratuvar (albümin, CRP, ESR, hemogram parametreleri ve İnsan Lökosit Antijen-B27 (HLA-B27)) verileri poliklinik dosyaları incelenerek hastane bilgi sistemi üzerinden retrospektif olarak kayıt edildi. Boy-kilo ölçümü poliklinik kayıtlarından elde edildi ve vücut kitle indeksi (VKİ) (kg/m²) hesaplandı.

Hastalık Aktivite İndeksi

Çalışmamız retrospektif olarak tasarlandığı için hastalık aktivitesinin değerlendirilmesinde mevcut veriler dahilinde ASDAS yerine geçerliliği ve güvenilirliği kanıtlanmış Bath Ankilozan Spondilit Fonksiyonel İndeksi (BASFI) ve BASDAI skorları kullanıldı.^{8,17} BASFI fonksiyonel durumu değerlendirmek için geliştirilmiş 8 sorudan ve günlük işlerle baş edebilmeyi değerlendiren 2 sorudan oluşuyordu.¹⁷ Her bir soru için 0-10 arası puan kullanılarak toplam alınan skorun 10'a bölünmesiyle sonuç skoru elde edildi. BASDAI skoru yorgunluk, spinal ağrı, periferik artrit, entezit, sabah tutukluğunun şiddeti ve sabah tutukluğunun süresini içeren 6 parametreden oluşuyordu. Hastaların yanıtları doğrultusunda her bir parametreye 0-10 arası puan verildi, yüksek puan hastalığın ciddiyeti gösteriyordu. BASDAI skoru ≥ 4 olanlar aktif hasta olarak kabul edildi.⁸ Aktif hastalığı olan AS hastaları ile remisyonda olan hastalar demografik veriler, hemogram parametreleri, SII ve PAR açısından karşılaştırıldı.

İstatistiksel Analiz

Çalışma verileri SPSS 29,0 paket programında analiz edildi. Analizlerde tanımlayıcı ölçütlerden sıklık, yüzde, ortalama, standart sapma, ortanca ve çeyrekler arası aralık kullanıldı. Normal dağılım gösteren sürekli değişkenlerde

Student t testi kullanılırken, normal dağılım göstermeyen sürekli verilerin değerlendirilmesinde Mann Whitney U testi kullanıldı. Ayrıca kategorik verilerin karşılaştırılmasında Ki-kare testi kullanıldı. Tüm analizler sonucunda p değerinin 0,05 altında olması anlamlı olarak kabul edildi.

BULGULAR

Çalışmaya 79 (%50.0) AS hastası ve 79 (%50.0) sağlıklı olmak üzere toplam 158 katılımcı dahil edildi. AS ve sağlıklı gruptaki katılımcıların demografik, antropometrik ve laboratuvar parametreleri Tablo 1'de özetlenmiştir. AS grubunun yaş ortalaması $42,53 \pm 6,60$, sağlıklı grubun $41,37 \pm 10,86$ yıldır ($p=460$). AS grubunda 49 (%62,0), sağlıklı grupta 35 (44,3) katılımcı erkekti ($p=0,026$). Biyokimyasal parametreler değerlendirildiğinde CRP, sedimentasyon ve trombosit değerlerinin AS grubunda sağlıklı gruba göre istatistiksel olarak anlamlı oranda daha yüksek olduğu tespit edildi (sırasıyla $p<0,001$, $p=0,003$, $p=0,038$). Ayrıca SII, PAR ve CAR değerleri de AS grubunda sağlıklı gruba göre istatistiksel olarak anlamlı oranda daha yüksekti (sırasıyla $p<0,001$, $p=0,037$, $p=0,046$). İki grup arasında NLR ve PLR düzeyleri açısından anlamlı farklılık saptanmadı ($p>0,05$).

AS hastalarının şikayet süresi ortanca 156,0 [130,0], tanı süresi 96,0 [85,0] aydır. HLA B27 pozitifliği 20 (64,5) hastada mevcuttu. BASDAI skoruna göre 42 (%54,5) hasta aktif, 35 (%45,5) hasta remisyon dönemindeydi. 2 hastanın BASDAI skorları şüpheli olduğundan herhangi bir gruba dahil edilmedi. Aktif ve remisyon döneminde olan hastaların demografik, antropometrik ve laboratuvar parametreleri Tablo 2'de özetlenmiştir. İki grup arasında yaş, cinsiyet, hastalık süresi ve uygulanan tedavi protokolleri yönünden anlamlı farklılık yoktu ($p>0,05$). CRP ve CAR değerleri aktif dönemde olanda hastalarda istatistiksel olarak anlamlı oranda daha yüksek tespit edilirken (sırasıyla $p=0,035$, $p=0,038$); ESR, trombosit, SII ve PAR düzeyleri açısından anlamlı fark saptanmadı ($p>0,05$).

Tablo 1. AS ve sağlıklı gruptaki katılımcıların demografik, antropometrik ve laboratuvar parametreleri

	Sağlıklı grup (n=79)	AS grubu (n=79)	p
Yaş, yıl	42,53±6,60	41,37±10,86	0,460*
Cinsiyet Erkek, n(%)	35 (44,3)	49 (62,0)	0,026 [†]
Kadın, n(%)	44 (55,7)	30 (38,0)	
VKİ, kg/m ²	25,71±3,62	26,75±4,76	0,126*
Albumin, g/dL	4,27±0,24	4,27±0,36	0,854*
CRP, mg/L	0,00 [0,00]	0,00 [6,66]	< 0,001 [‡]
Sedimentasyon, mm/h	8,50 [11,0]	11,0 [16,0]	0,003 [‡]
Lökosit, K/uL	6,56 [2,26]	7,32±1,96	0,137 [‡]
RDW, %	15,6 [1,3]	15,6 [1,4]	0,961 [‡]
Trombosit, K/uL	248,76±55,73	267,25±55,64	0,038 *
MPV, fl	7,58 [1,59]	7,45 [1,57]	0,549 [‡]
Nötrofil, K/uL	3,48 [1,61]	4,24±1,49	0,062 [‡]
Lenfosit, K/uL	2,2 [0,74]	2,29±0,73	0,519 [‡]
CAR	0,0 [0,0]	0,0 [2,28]	< 0,001 [‡]
NLR	1,62 [0,64]	1,77 [1,13]	0,205 [‡]
PLR	115,24±33,98	114,72 [58,65]	0,410 [‡]
PAR	58,39±13,64	63,06±14,28	0,037 *
SII (Trombosit X Nötrofil / Lenfosit)	417,67 [197,84]	493,28 [305,54]	0,046 [‡]

*Student t test, [†]Ki-kare test, [‡]Mann Whitney U test.

Veriler ortalama±standart sapma, n(%) ve ortanca [çeyrekler arası aralık] olarak sunulmuştur.

VKİ: vücut kitle indeksi; CRP: C-reaktif protein; RDW: eritrosit dağılım hacmi; MPV: ortalama trombosit hacmi; CAR: C-reaktif protein albumin oranı; NLR: nötrofil lenfosit oranı; PLR: trombosit lenfosit oranı; PAR: trombosit albumin oranı; SII: sistemik İnflamasyon indeksi.

Tablo 2. AS grubunda aktif ve remisyon döneminde olan hastaların demografik, antropometrik ve laboratuvar parametreleri			
	BASDAI<4 (n=35)	BASDAI≥4 (n=42)	p
Yaş, yıl	39,91±11,86	42,98±9,98	0,230*
Cinsiyet Erkek, n(%)	25 (71,4)	24 (57,1)	0,194†
Kadın, n(%)	10 (28,6)	18 (42,9)	
VKİ, kg/m ²	25,71±4,35	27,74±4,93	0,059*
Şikayet süresi, ay	156,0 [132,0]	168,0 [140,0]	0,381‡
Hastalık süresi, ay	107,94±56,24	96,0 [99,0]	0,892‡
HLA B27 pozitifliği**, n(%)	8 (66,7)	12 (63,2)	0,842†
BASDAI	2,65 [2,15]	6,50 [2,68]	<0,001‡
BASFI	1,20 [2,15]	4,51±2,73	<0,001‡
Uygulanan tedavi protokolü			
NSAID	21 (60,0)	31 (73,8)	0,198†
Glukokortikoid	1 (2,9)	4 (9,5)	0,250†
Biyolojik DMARD	21 (60,0)	21 (50,0)	0,380†
Hedefe yönelik DMARD	0 (0,0)	1 (2,4)	0,358†
Konvansiyonel sentetik DMARD	5 (14,3)	12 (28,6)	0,132†
Albumin, g/dL	4,30 [0,50]	4,26±0,26	0,877‡
CRP, mg/L	0,0 [4,34]	3,44 [12,93]	0,035‡
Sedimentasyon, mm/h	9,0 [7,0]	13,5 [23,0]	0,160‡
Lökosit, K/uL	7,52±2,03	7,23 [1,9]	0,577‡
RDW, %	15,3 [1,6]	15,7 [1,27]	0,155‡
Trombosit, K/uL	256,71±53,88	273,93±56,65	0,177†
MPV, fl	7,53 [2,06]	7,49±1,04	0,290‡
Nötrofil, K/uL	4,31±1,59	4,23±1,41	0,823†
Lenfosit, K/uL	2,38±0,64	2,26±0,80	0,444†
CAR	0,0 [1,03]	0,79 [3,08]	0,038‡
NLR	1,89±0,75	1,72 [1,10]	0,638‡
PLR	106,62 [49,85]	117,75 [62,60]	0,133‡
PAR	60,23±12,46	64,84±15,46	0,076†
SII (Trombosit X Nötrofil / Lenfosit)	485,02±212,93	449,46 [297,44]	0,379‡

*Student t test, †Ki-kare test, ‡Mann Whitney U test.
Veriler ortalama±standart sapma, n(%) ve ortanca [çeyrekler arası aralık] olarak sunulmuştur.
**Bazı veriler eksiktir.
VKİ: vücut kitle indeksi; HLA-B27: İnsan Lökosit Antijeni-B27; BASDAI: Bath Ankilozan Spondilit Hastalık Aktivite İndeksi; BASFI: Bath Ankilozan Spondilit Fonksiyonel İndeksi; NSAID: non-steroidal antiinflatuar ilaçlar; DMARD: hastalık modifiye eden anti-romatizmal ilaçlar; CRP: C-reaktif protein; RDW: eritrosit dağılım hacmi; MPV: ortalama trombosit hacmi; CAR: C-reaktif protein albumin oranı; NLR: nötrofil lenfosit oranı; PLR: trombosit lenfosit oranı; PAR: trombosit albumin oranı; SII: sistemik İnflamasyon indeksi.

TARTIŞMA

AS, etiyojisi halen daha belirsiz olmasına rağmen, patogenez ve progresyonunda inflamasyonun önemli rolü olduğu bilinen, kronik otoimmün bir hastalıktır.¹⁸ AS'li hastalarda mortalite oranları normal popülasyona göre daha fazladır ve hastalar tedavi edilmedikleri takdirde eklem füzyonu ile birlikte ciddi işlev bozukluğu meydana gelir.¹⁹ Erken teşhis ve uygun tedavi ile yüksek oranlarda klinik remisyon elde edilebileceğinden, hasta yönetiminde hastalık aktivitesi ile birlikte inflamatuvar yanıtın düzenli aralıklarla değerlendirilmesi önerilir. Hastalık aktivitesini belirlemek için en yaygın kullanılan yöntem BASDAI skorudur.⁸ Hasta beyanına dayandığı için uygulaması zor, zaman alıcı ve subjektif bir yöntemdir. Bu nedenle hastalık aktivitesini değerlendirmek için objektif yöntemlerin belirlenmesine ihtiyaç duyulmuştur. SII ve PAR rutinde kolay ulaşılabilen, düşük maliyetli inflamatuvar indeks türleridir. Çalışmamızda AS'li hastalarda sağlıklı bireylere göre SII ve PAR düzeylerinin arttığı, fakat aktif hastalığı olan grupla remisyonunda olan grup arasında bu iki parametre açısından anlamlı fark olmadığı tespit edilmiştir.

SII ilk olarak Hu ve ark. tarafından geliştirilmiş ve malignite hastalarının dahil edildiği bir çok çalışmada kanser nüksü veya metastazını tahmin etmedeki prognostik önemi kanıtlanmıştır.^{14,20} SII seviyesindeki artışın başlıca nedeni inflamatuvar bir hadiseye karşı gelişen yanıt sonucu oluşan trombositoz, nötrofil artışı ve lenfopenidir. Son zamanlarda otoimmün hastalıklarla ilgili yapılan çalışmalarda; Behçet ve Romatoid Artrit (RA) gibi hastalıklarda hastalık aktivitesini değerlendirmek için veya Anti-nötrofil sitoplazmik antikor ilişkili vaskülitlerde kötü prognoz göstergesi olarak kullanılabileceği gösterilmiştir.²²⁻²³ Çalışmamızdan önce AS'li hastalarda hastalık aktivitesi ile SII düzeyi arasındaki ilişkinin incelendiği, bildiğimiz kadarıyla ilk ve tek çalışma 2021 yılında yayınlanmıştır.²⁴ AS'li hastalarda sağlıklı bireylere göre ve hastalığı aktif olanlarda remisyonunda olanlara göre SII değerinin daha yüksek olduğu tespit edilmiş, SII'nın AS hastalarında hastalık aktivitesini izlemek için yeni bir biyobelirteç olabileceği vurgulanmıştır.²⁴ Ça-

lışmamızda bu çalışmaya benzer şekilde AS'li hastalarda sağlıklı bireylere göre SII değeri istatistiksel olarak anlamlı oranda daha yüksek olduğu tespit edilirken, aktif hastalığı olan grupla remisyonunda olan grup arasında beklenenin aksine anlamlı fark bulunamamıştır (sırasıyla $p=0,046$, $p=0,379$). Ayrıca sistemik inflamasyonun güçlü göstergeleri olan 3 ana parametreyi (lenfosit, nötrofil, trombosit) birden içerdiği için SII'nın NLR ve PLR oranlarına göre inflamatuvar kapasiteyi daha kapsamlı bir şekilde yansıttığı düşünülmektedir.²⁰ Çalışmamızda da bunu destekleyecek şekilde AS'li hastalarda sağlıklı bireylere göre SII değeri yüksek tespit edilirken ($p=0,046$), NLR ve PLR düzeylerine bakıldığında iki grup arasında anlamlı fark saptanamamıştır ($p>0,05$).

Trombosit sayısı inflamatuvar yanıtı yansıtan kritik bir göstergedir.²⁵ AS hastalarında trombosit sayısının klinik önemini araştıran çok sayıda çalışma yapılmış, tutarlı bir sonuç elde edilememiştir. Son olarak Qian ve ark. yaptığı çalışmada AS hastalarında inflamasyon şiddetini ve anti-TNF- α tedavisine yanıtı belirlemede trombosit sayısının bir biyobelirteç olarak kullanılabileceği vurgulanmıştır.²⁶ Albüminin de negatif akut faz reaktanı olduğu düşünülürse PAR değerinin inflamatuvar hastalıklarda artması beklenir. Buna binaen 2022 yılında yayınlanmış bir çalışmada AS hastalarında PAR ile BASDAI arasında pozitif korelasyon olduğu tespit edilirken, Psöriyatik artritli hastalarda hastalık aktivitesi ile PAR arasında anlamlı ilişki tespit edilememiştir.²⁷ Çalışmamızda da trombosit ve PAR değerlerinin AS grubunda sağlıklı gruba göre istatistiksel olarak anlamlı oranda daha yüksek oldukları tespit edilirken (sırasıyla $p=0,038$, $p=0,037$), aktif hastalığı olan grupla remisyonunda olan grup arasında iki parametre açısından da anlamlı fark bulunamamıştır ($p>0,05$).

CAR değeri RA gibi hastalıklarda hastalık aktivitesini belirlemek için yeni bir gösterge olarak ortaya çıkmış ve izole CRP'ye kıyasla inflamasyon seviyesini daha doğru yansıttığı vurgulanmıştır.^{28,29} AS hastalarında CAR değeri ile ilgili yapılan çalışmalar sonucunda CAR ile BASDAI

skoru arasında anlamlı bir korelasyon olduğu ve CAR'ın AS hastalarında hastalık aktivite tayininde kullanılabilceği tespit edilmiştir.^{30,31} Zhong ve ark. tarafından yapılan çalışmada da aktif hasta grubunu belirlemede en iyi inflamatuvar belirteçlerden birinin CAR olduğu bulunmuştur.¹¹ Çalışmamızda da CAR'ın hem AS'li hastalarda kontrollere göre hem de aktif hastalığı olanlarda remisyonda olanlara göre istatistiksel olarak anlamlı oranda daha yüksek olduğu görülmüştür (sırasıyla $p<0,001$, $p=0,038$).

Çalışmamızın bazı sınırlamaları mevcuttu. Tek merkezli bir çalışma olması, AS hasta sayısının nispeten az olması, hastalık aktivitesini değerlendirmek için kullanılan diğer önemli skorların (ASDAS, ASDAS- CRP ve ASDAS-ESR gibi) çalışmaya dahil edilmemesi ve korelasyon analizlerinin yapılamaması başlıca sınırlamalar arasındaydı. Ayrıca tedavinin SII ve PAR değerlerine etkisi değerlendirilemedi. İnflamatuvar yanıtı etkileyebilecek komorbiditesi ve hastalığı erken aşamasında olan hastaların dışlanmış olması ise çalışmamızın güçlü yönleriydi.

Sonuç olarak bu çalışmada AS hastalarında sağlıklı kontroller ile karşılaştırıldığında SII ve PAR değerlerinin artmış olduğu tespit edilirken, beklenenin aksine hastalık aktivitesi ile SII ve PAR değerleri arasında herhangi bir ilişki tespit edilemedi. AS'de inflamasyonun erken tanısallı belirteci olarak SII ve PAR'ın uygulanabilirliğini belirlemek için daha büyük örneklem büyüklüğüne sahip, prospektif çalışmalara ihtiyaç vardır.

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Splenule Frequency on Computed Tomography Scans in Children, Presenting to the Emergency Department

Acil Servise Başvuran ve Bilgisayarlı Tomografi Çekilen Çocuk ve Ergenlerde Splenül Sıklığı

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Abstract

Introduction	Accessory spleen, also known as "splenule", is the presence of splenic tissue in ectopic localisations. The presence of splenule is important, especially in patients scheduled for splenectomy, as it may cause refractory symptoms. The aim of the present study is to define the frequency of splenule(s) in children (0-17 years) who received non-contrast and contrast enhanced computed tomography (NECT and CECT) protocols in the emergency department.
Materials and Methods	748 children (aged 0 to 17 years) who were admitted to the emergency department between May 2015 – September 2022 and had NECT and CECT abdominal scans were included in the study. Patients whose CT protocols were incomplete and cases with traumatic splenic injury and / or cases with poor image quality and patients with a history of splenectomy or hematologic pathology were excluded from the study (n: 100). A total of 648 patients were included in the cohort. NECT and CECT scans of all patients were assessed; the localisation as well as the antero-posterior (AP), medio-lateral (ML) and cranio-caudal (CC) dimensions of each splenule were assessed.
Results	A total of 648 cases with 467 males (72.1%) and 181 females (27.9%) were included in the study. Splenules were observed in 131 (20.2%) cases. More than one splenule was detected in 21 of these 131 cases. 159 splenules were observed in total, with a mean volume of 0,72 ±0,95 ml. The most common location was found to be the splenic hilus (n=55, 41.9%).
Conclusion	Our study has proved that splenules are common anatomical variants, seen at a rate of 20.2% in this age cohort. A cross-sectional imaging should be performed to determine the presence, location, and number of the splenules before a scheduled splenectomy.
Keywords	Abdomen, accessory spleen, contrast enhanced computed tomography, non-contrast enhanced computed tomography, pediatric, splenule

Öz

Amaç	Dalak dokusunun ektopik lokalizasyonda bulunmasına aksesuar dalak veya splenül ismi verilmektedir. Cerrahi girişim planlanan hastalarda splenül varlığının tayini önem teşkil etmektedir. Çalışmamızın amacı acil servise başvuran ve kontrastlı ve kontrastsız bilgisayarlı tomografi (BT) çekimi yapılan çocuk hastalarda (0-17 yaş) splenül sıklığını belirlemektir.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Mayıs 2015 ile Eylül 2022 arasında acil servise başvuran ve batin BT ile tetkik edilen 748 çocuk hasta içerisinde çekim protokolü eksikliği olanlar, travmatik dalak hasarı olanlar, geçirilmiş splenektomi öyküsü veya hematolojik hastalık öyküsü olan olgular çıkarılarak 648 hasta çalışmaya dahil edildi. Kontrastsız ve kontrastlı BT görüntüleri gerek splenül lokalizasyonu gerekse boyut ve hacimleri açısından incelendi.
Bulgular	Çalışmaya 467 erkek (%72.1) ve 181 kadın (%27.9) olgu içerisinde 131'inde (%20.2) splenül tespit edildi. 21 olguda birden fazla splenül tespit edildi. Toplamda 159 splenül izlenmiş olup tespit edilen splenüllerin ortalama hacmi 0.72 ±0.95 ml ve en sık yerleşim yeri dalak hilusu (n=55, %41.9) olarak gözlemlendi.
Sonuç	Çalışmamız sık bir anatomik varyant olan splenülün bu yaş grubunda %20.2 oranında görüldüğünü göstermiştir. Oldukça sık görülen bu anatomik varyantın tedavi amacıyla splenektomi planlanan çocuk hastaların preoperatif değerlendirilmesinde splenül varlığının ve sayısının kesitsel görüntüleme yöntemleriyle belirlenmesi önerilir.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Abdomen, aksesuar dalak, bilgisayarlı tomografi, pediatri, splenül



INTRODUCTION

Ectopic splenic tissue is a well-known entity, which can be found in different locations, apart from the main body of the spleen¹. Theoretically they arise from the fusion failure in mesenchymal budding. The latter must be differentiated from the post-traumatic splenosis; which is an ectopic splenic tissue resulting from an abdominal trauma and splenic tissue spread². The parenchymal morphology as well as the function are the same as the original spleen. Vascular supply in the majority of cases is from the splenic artery³.

It is of an imaging importance for radiologists because of the differential diagnosis, which comprises lymphadenopathy, pancreas, suprarenal gland and / or tumor and even kidney tumors. Clinically less relevant but still they can complicate while presenting to the emergency department (ED) with torsion, spontaneous rupture or can lead to unsuccessful splenectomy once misinterpreted or unseen on preoperative scans. Therefore the knowledge of this tissue and awareness of possible locations could help to improve surgeons' success in the abdominal interventions⁴. Even if there's no proven gold standard imaging for the splenic tissue, Mortelet et al. stated that splenules have a characteristic appearance on CT as well-margined, round masses with a homogenous enhancement on CECT images⁵. Abdominal radiologists can assess splenic tissue whether original or ectopic by any means available such as CT, MRI or ultrasound (US), with US being the most accessible but the least sensitive modality in the investigation of accessory splenic tissue, or splenule. The wide-angled scanning possibility of the cross-sectional imaging tools such as CT and MRI make the search of a splenule more accurate and provide a higher overall sensitivity.

Therefore, we wanted to assess our pediatric abdominal imaging data for such a query. The aim is to find out whether in the pediatric patient group, the frequency of a splenule would differ from the adult group. The advantage of our cohort is that all patients received native and

contrast enhanced CT scans for their differentials, while presenting to the ED.

As there is extensive literature on the occurrence/prevalence of splenules amongst adults, our study aims to fill a gap about the prevalence of splenules in young children and adolescents.

MATERIALS and METHODS

A total number of 748 children between May 2015 and September 2022 were scanned in our institution for diverse abdominal emergencies. 100 cases were excluded from the study cohort due to the absence of contrast enhanced CT protocol (CECT) on examination, history of traumatic splenic rupture, deficiencies with image quality, and cases with previous splenectomy and/or with known hematological disorders. All CT scans were obtained in a 160-slice computed tomography scanner with a 128-detector equipment (Aquilion Prime, Toshiba Medical Systems, Otawara, Japan). 3 dimensional (3D) reconstructions as well as the raw data pictures were then analyzed retrospectively by two blinded radiologists using the Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) (Sectra AB, Linköping, Sweden) of Adnan Menderes University Hospital. The board-certified radiologists were attending physicians with a subspecialty focus on abdominal imaging with 5 years or more of an experience. Non-ionic intravenous (IV) contrast medium (300mg/100ml, with 1.5 ml/kg doses) was administered for all the patients. CT confirmed splenules have been categorized upon their locations. Their densities were correlated with region of interest (ROI) and density measurements in Hounsfield Units (HU) and the volumes have been measured using three axes and the formula of: height x depth x length x 0,52 respectively⁶.

The study was approved by the Aydın Adnan Menderes University ethics committee (Project number: E-53043469-050.04.04-337450) and was conducted in accordance with the principles of the declaration of Helsinki. MS-Excel and

SPSS (version 26.0, IBM Corp., Armonk, NY, USA) were used to stratify the obtained data. As per standard practice for our institution, parental consent was obtained for each CT examination before the examination was held.

RESULTS

After the exclusion of the non-suitable cases, the remaining 648 patients (181 females; 27.9% and 467 males; 72.1%) were then analysed. In 131 (20.2%) cases we observed splenules in various sizes and locations. The mean patient age was 9.9 ± 4.9 years, with 98 (74.8%) males and 33 (25.2%) females with splenules. The mean splenule volume was measured 0.72 ± 0.95 ml. Patient demographics are shown in Table 1.

Baseline Characteristics	# (or %)
Total cases	748
Excluded cases	100
Gender: F / M	181 / 467
Mean Age	9.9 ± 4.9 years
Total cases with splenules	131
Total number of splenules	159
Splenule gender distribution: F / M	33 (25%) / 98 (75%)
Mean splenule volume	0.72 ± 0.95 ml
Cases with n > one splenule	21
Patients with two splenules	16
Patients with three splenules	4
Patients with four splenules	1

There were 21 cases (16%) with CT-proven polysplenia; this being the presence of more than two ectopic splenic tissue. 16 of these cases had two, 4 cases had three and in one case we found four splenules; resulting in a total number of 159 splenules in the analysed cohort.

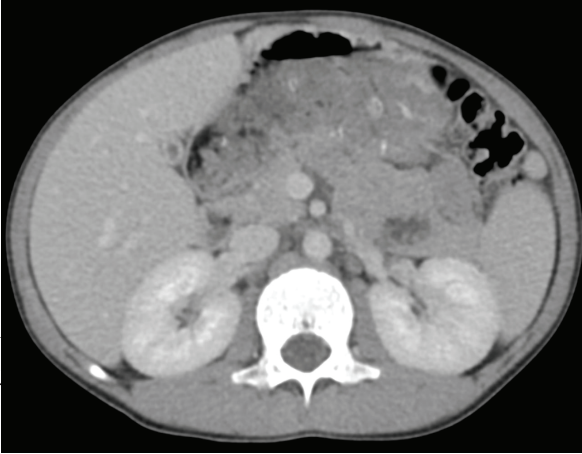
The most common location of splenules in our study was the splenic hilum (SH) with 54 splenules (33.9%), followed by 46 (28.9%) in the gastrosplenic ligament (GSL) (see Fig. 1), 34 (21.3%) in the splenocolic ligament (SCL) (see

Fig. 2), 16 (10%) in the splenorenal ligament (SRL), seven (0.4%) into the pancreatic tail (PT) (see Fig. 3), two (1.2%) in the greater omentum (GO) (see Fig. 4). Examples of splenules' localisations can be seen in Figures 1 to 4. No splenules were found in the pelvis (Table 2).

Localisations	# of cases
Pancreas tail (PT)	7
Splenic hilum (SH)	54
Gastrosplenic ligament (GSL)	46
Splenorenal ligament (SRL)	16
Splenocolic ligament (SCL)	34
Greater omentum (GO)	2
Pelvis	0



Figure 1: Splenule at the gastrosplenic ligament (GSL) of a 10 years old boy.



DISCUSSION

Splenules are often incidental findings on different imaging examinations generally without significant clinical relevance⁷. On the other hand, they are radiologically on the differential diagnosis list amongst tumors or metastatic lymph nodes. Since splenectomy is a curative treatment in diseases such as hereditary spherocytosis and chronic immune thrombocytopenic purpura, the occurrence of a potential splenule in these patients becomes clinically relevant. Hence, underdiagnosis can lead to recurrence of the disease⁸. There are also rare complications of a splenule itself, such as torsion, hemorrhage, rupture, and bowel obstruction^{7,9,10}. According to one of the main textbook of the anatomy (Gray's Anatomy) the prevalence of splenule is as low as 10% in the human population¹¹. Mortelet et al. have found in their retrospective analysis the prevalence to be as high as 15.6%⁵, whereas Romer et al. have found it to be 11% in their patient cohort of 1735 CT scans¹². A similar investigation amongst the Turkish population showed its presence to vary between 10 to 30% in the report of Yildiz et al.¹³. A well detailed meta-analysis by Vikse et al. in 2017 found this prevalence to be as high as 14.5% but claimed that it could vary amongst different countries and populations¹⁴. In the same study it was pointed out that 53 out of 81 studies were surgically lead cohorts whereas only 22% of studies in the meta-analysis were imaging studies. Their incidence rates ranged between 95 % (cadaveric studies) and 16% (imaging studies); this demonstrates the

wide-angle approach when it is about the imaging of the human body. Vikse et al. stated that studies with a smaller sample size found a higher prevalence of splenules. An additional finding was that patients with known Immune Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP) or with previous splenectomy tended to have a higher prevalence for splenules. Last comparable remark with their meta-analysis is that 19% of patients have more than one splenule, which correlates with our findings, being 16%. The aforementioned findings raised our awareness towards the lack throughout the literature about the radiologic identification of splenules in the pediatric age group of patients.

Hence, the youngest case of splenule ever reported is a 17 years old patient¹⁵, there is no clear answer to the question about the incidence in children. Even if our statistical findings were parallel to the co-existing literature, the fact that our youngest case with splenule was a 14-month-old baby, proves that our investigation is unique in the field because of the focused age group of our cohort. As defined in the study of Vikse et al; a splenule can be found as high as in 15% of people and with a quarter of these patients having more than one splenule¹⁴. These findings are well correlated with our age-specific patients' group.

The spleen acts as a hematopoietic center, maintaining its properties throughout the later stages of life¹⁶. Splenules have demonstrated to have various volumes in the literature ranging from 0.5 to 3.5 ml¹⁷. The volumetric measurements mentioned in the literature correlate well with our values obtained; mean volume being measured of 0.72 ±0.95 ml. The commonest location of splenules being at the hilum itself, they can be found in any part of the abdomen¹⁸, thus may lead to various surgical and medical misdiagnoses and pathological consequences.

Its retrospective design, lack of inter-observer conformity, not having a representative cohort for the prevalence of the splenule in this age group, not having homogenous gender and age distribution throughout the patients and

lastly lack of surgical or pathological diagnosis of our cases, were the limitations of the study. Being adequately representative for the regional population because of the high number of scans evaluated, including NECT and CECT protocols has led to an increased diagnostic accuracy validated by two different blinded radiologists which were the study strengths.

CONCLUSION

Splenules are well-shaped round masses mostly less than 2 cm in diameter and are commonly seen structures (20.2% in our cohort) during abdominal imaging examinations. They can be found in various locations; with the splenic hilum being the most frequent site (34%). The presence of splenules has a clinical significance in the preoperative assessment of children and adolescents with abdominal emergencies. Our study findings offer a guide into the identification of splenules in children aged 0-17 years presenting with abdominal emergencies and/or with various splenic disorders.

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HT22 Fare Hipokampal Hücre Hattının Nöronal Farklanma Besiyerine Verdiği Apoptotik Tepkinin Ölçülmesi

Measuring the Apoptotic Response of the HT22 Mouse Hippocampal Cell Line to Neuronal Differentiation Medium

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Öz

Amaç	Bu çalışmanın amacı nörobiyoloji çalışmalarında sıkça kullanılmakta olan HT22 fare hipokampal hücre hattının, nöronal farklılaşma modeli olarak kullanılabilirliğinin anlaşılması için standart bir farklılaşma besiyerine farklı sürelerde verdiği apoptotik cevabın sınanmasıdır.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	HT22 hücrelerinin ekilmesi ve farklılaşma dışında kültüre edilmesi için HG-DMEM farklılaşma için ise B27+ katkılı NB+ medyum kullanılmıştır. Kontrol grubu da dâhil olmak üzere toplam 9 farklı grup standart olarak kültüre edilmiştir. Deney sonunda AnnexinV/PI işaretlemesiyle erken/geç apoptozis ve nekrozis oranları akım sitometrik olarak belirlenmiştir. Verilerin normal dağılıma uyup uymadığı Shapiro-Wilks testi ile sılandıktan sonra en uygun testle istatistiksel analiz gerçekleştirilmiştir.
Bulgular	Gruplar arasındaki karşılaştırmada erken apoptozis ($P<0.01$) ve geç apoptozis ($P<0.001$) hücre popülasyon oranları açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark tespit edilirken nekrozis açısından anlamlı bir fark olmadığı gözlemlenmiştir ($P=0.064$). 48 ve 72 saat farklılaşma besiyerinde kültüre edilen grupların büyük çoğunluğunda, sadece HG-DMEM ile veya 24 saat farklılaşma hücrelere kıyasla istatistiksel olarak anlamlı düzeyde ($P<0.001$) erken apoptozis artışı olduğu görülmüştür. Farklılaşma besiyeri ile kültüre edilen grupların çoğunluğunda kontrol grubuna kıyasla anlamlı düzeyde geç apoptozis artışı gözlenirken ($P<0.001$), farklı süreler farklılaşma grupları arasında anlamlı bir fark gözlenmemiştir ($P>0.05$).
Sonuç	Nörodegeneratif hastalıklara ait önemli patobiyolojik özelliklerin in-vitro düzeyde modellenmesinde sıkça kullanılan, fakat nöronal farklılaşma açısından uygunluğu yeterince bilinmeyen HT22 hipokampal hücre hattının, yaygın olarak kullanılan bir farklılaşma besiyerine erken apoptozis (kültürleme süresine bağlı) ve geç apoptozis (süreden bağımsız) artışı şeklinde anlamlı tepkiler oluşturduğu anlaşılmıştır. Bulgularımız HT22 hücre hattının farklılaşma çalışmalarında kullanılabilirliği açısından apoptozis düzeyinde önemli ipuçları sunmaktadır.
Anahtar Kelimeler	HT22, Hipokampus, Nöronal Farklılaşma, Apoptozis, Akım Sitometri

Abstract

Introduction	The aim of this study is to test the apoptotic response of the HT22 mouse hippocampal cell line to a broadly accepted differentiation medium at different duration to understand its usability as a neuronal differentiation model.
Materials and Methods	For seeding and culturing HT22 cells aside the differentiation, HG-DMEM and for differentiation B27+ supplemented NB+ medium were used, respectively. A total of 9 different groups, including the control group, were cultured in standard cell culture environment. At the end of the experiment, the rates of early/late apoptosis and necrosis were determined via flow cytometric analysis of AnnexinV/PI labeled HT22 cells along with appropriate technical controls. After testing whether the raw data fit the normal distribution by utilizing Shapiro-Wilks test, further statistical analyzes were performed with the most appropriate parametric or non-parametric tests.
Results	Statistically significant differences were found in terms of early ($P<0.01$) and late apoptosis ($P<0.001$) cell population rates, while there was no significant difference of necrosis ($P=0.064$). Significant ($P<0.001$) increase in early apoptosis was evident in the majority of groups cultured with differentiation medium for 48 or 72 hours, compared to the cells cultured with only HG-DMEM or differentiation media for 24 hours. While there was a significant increment in late apoptosis in the majority of the groups cultured with the differentiation medium compared to the control group ($P<0.001$), no significant difference was observed between the groups differentiated for different durations ($P>0.05$).
Conclusion	HT22 hippocampal cell line, which is frequently used in in-vitro modeling of significant patho-biological features of neurodegenerative diseases, but poorly understood for the suitability in neuronal differentiation, has a markedly increased response to a widely accepted differentiation medium in terms of early apoptosis (culturing duration dependent) and late apoptosis (regardless of duration). Our findings provide important clues at the level of apoptosis in terms of the usability of the HT22 cell line in differentiation studies.
Keywords	HT22, Hippocampus, Neuronal Differentiation, Apoptosis, Flow Cytometry



INTRODUCTION

Nöronal farklılaşma gelişim ya da doğum sonrasında merkezi sinir sisteminde (MSS) nöron üretiminin yani nörogenezin temel basamaklarından birisi olarak kabul edilmektedir¹⁻³. Gelişim sırasında taslak halindeki MSS'nin birçok nörojenik tabakasında doğan nöral kök hücreler, bölünme yoluyla sayılarını arttırarak ve farklılaşmaya başlayıp glial hücre tiplerine ya da farklı tip nöronlara dönüşmek üzere hücresele kararlar vermektedir. Doğumdan sonra ise, MSS'nin yalnızca iki tabakasında (hipokampus'un subgranüler tabakası ve ventriculus lateralis'leri çevreleyen subventriküler tabaka) gözlenen nöron üretimi, Erişkin Hipokampal Nörogenez (EHN) ve Erişkin Olfaktör Nörogenez (EON) olarak isimlendirilmektedir⁴⁻⁷. Fetal gelişim sırasında ve doğumdan sonra gerçekleşen nörogenez ile ilgili sayısız makale bulunmaktadır. Örneğin, erişkin nörogenez (EN) konusu günümüze kadar on bini aşkın PUBMED makalesine konu olmuştur^{4,5}. Buna rağmen, fizyolojik işleyişi hakkında bile halen yeteri kadar bilgi sahibi olmadığımız nörogenez'in MSS ile ilgili birçok hastalıkla ilişkili olduğu anlaşılmıştır⁸.

Dolayısıyla, fetal ve/veya EN'yi sağlıklı ve hastalıkta çeşitli açılardan daha iyi anlayabilmek için deney hayvanı kullanımını gerektirmeyen, teknik olarak ölümsüzleştirilerek belli kültür pasajları boyunca hücresele ve moleküler karakterlerini koruyabilen hücre hatları üzerinde oluşturulan in-vitro modeller literatüre önemli katkılar sunmaktadır^{9,10}. Fetal gelişim sırasında nöral kök hücrelerin farklılaşmasına katkı sunan sinyal yollarını aktifleştirdiği düşünülen katkı maddeleri (retinoik asit, N2, B27), tropik faktörler (BDNF, GDNF) ve küçük moleküler (small molecules) vb. maddelerin kendi başına veya birleşim halinde kültür ortamına eklenmesiyle çeşitli hücre hatlarında suni olarak nöronal farklılaşma oluşturulduğu bilinmektedir¹⁰. Ancak nöronal farklılaşma modeli olarak kullanılan hücre hattı sayısı oldukça azdır¹⁰.

Bu çalışmada fare hipokampus (HP) dokusundan elde edilmiş, glutamata olan aşırı duyarlılığından dolayı

Alzheimer, Parkinson vb. nörodejeneratif hastalıklarda oluşan glutamat sitotoksitesini modellemek için sıklıkla kullanılan HT22 hücre hattının farklılaşma ortamına verdiği apoptotik tepkilerin akım sitometrik olarak test edilmesi amaçlanmıştır^{11,12}.

GEREÇ ve YÖNTEMLER

Hücre Kültürü

Nöral özelliklere sahip, ölümsüzleştirilmiş fare nöral hipokampal hücre hattı olan HT22 hücreleri (MERCK, Katolog No: SCC129), %10 fetal sığır serum (fetal bovine serum, FBS (Katolog No: ES-009-B), 2mM L-glutamin (Katolog No: TMS-002-C) ve %1 penisilin-streptomisin (Katolog No: TMS-AB2-C) içeren yüksek-glikozlu DMEM medyumla (HG-DMEM, Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium, Sigma, Katolog No: D6546), %5 CO₂ içeren ve 37° C sıcaklıktaki inkübatörde kültüre edilmiştir (Resim 1A) 13. 3 günde bir medyumları değiştirilen hücrelerin devamlılığını sağlamak amacıyla, hücreler %70-80 yoğunluğa ulaştığında, tripsin-EDTA ile (Katolog No: SM-2003-C), 37° C sıcaklıkta 3-4 dk muamele edildikten sonra 1:10 oranında pasajlanmıştır. Deneyler sırasında, tüm deney grupları için 6. pasajdaki (P6) hücreler kullanılmıştır (Resim 1).

Deney Tasarısı

Akım sitometrik analiz, hücrelerin farklanma medyumuna [%2 B27+ katkısı (Katolog No: A3582801, GibcoTM, 50X) içeren Nörobazal+ (NB+) medyum (NB, Katolog No: A3582901, GibcoTM)] ile değişik sürelerde (24, 48 ve 72 saat) muamelesi sonucunda erken apoptozis, geç apoptozis ve nekrozis oranlarının belirlenmesi için ticari olarak satın alınmış olan Annexin V/PI kiti (BioLegend, Katolog No:640932) kullanılarak hücrelerin, akım sitometri cihazıyla (BD FACSARIA III) ölçülmesi sonucu belirlenmiştir (n=6). Hücreler, flask başına başına 1X10⁶ hücre olacak şekilde T25 tip flasklara katkılı HG-DMEM medyumuna ekilmiştir. Toplam 9 grubu içeren deney tasarısı Şekil 1'de ve aşağıda verilmiştir.

1. Grupta (G1 grubu) hücreler katkılı HG-DMEM ile

- ekildikten 24 saat sonra,
2. Grupta (G2 grubu) ekildikten 48 saat sonra,
 3. Grupta (G3 grubu) katkılı HG-DMEM ile ekildikten 24 saat sonrasında medyum NB ile değiştirilip bu medyumla 24 saat muamele edildikten sonra,
 4. Grupta (G4 grubu) katkılı HG-DMEM ile ekildikten 24 saat sonrasında medyum NB ile değiştirilip bu medyumla 24 saat muamele edilip 24 saatin sonunda medyum tekrar katkılı HG-DMEM ile değişip bu şekilde 24 saat bekletildikten sonra,
 5. Grupta (G5 grubu) katkılı HG-DMEM ile ekildikten 24 saat sonrasında medyum NB ile değiştirilip bu medyumla 24 saat muamele edilip 24 saatin sonunda medyum tekrar katkılı HG-DMEM ile değişip bu şekilde 48 saat bekletildikten sonra,
 6. Grupta (G6 grubu) katkılı HG-DMEM ile ekildikten 24 saat sonrasında medyum NB ile değiştirilip bu medyumla 48 saat muamele edildikten sonra,
 7. Grupta (G7 grubu) katkılı HG-DMEM ile ekildikten 24 saat sonrasında medyum NB ile değiştirilip bu medyumla 48 saat muamele edilip 48 saatin sonunda medyum tekrar katkılı HG-DMEM ile değişip bu şekilde 24 saat bekletildikten sonra,
 8. Grupta (G8 grubu) katkılı HG-DMEM ile ekildikten 24 saat sonrasında medyum NB ile değiştirilip bu medyumla 48 saat muamele edilip 48 saatin sonunda medyum tekrar katkılı HG-DMEM ile değişip bu şekilde 48 saat bekletildikten sonra,
 9. Grupta (G9 grubu) katkılı HG-DMEM ile ekildikten 24 saat sonrasında medyum NB ile değiştirilip bu medyumla 72 saat muamele edildikten sonra, deney sonlandırılarak örnekler akım sitometrik analiz için hazırlanmıştır (Şekil 1).

Akım Sitometrik Analiz

Akım sitometrik analizler için Mersin Üniversitesi İleri Teknoloji Eğitim, Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi'nde bulunan BD FACS Aria III cihazı kullanılmıştır. Her kullanım öncesi cihazın 70'lik nozzle ile performans kontrolü ve drop delay değer tespiti yapılmıştır. Farklı gru-

plara ait hücre popülasyonlarında Erken/Geç Apoptozis ve Nekrozis durumlarını belirlemek amacıyla Annexin V ve Propidyum İyodid (PI) kiti (BioLegend, Katalog No:640932) kullanılmıştır. Kit içerisindeki PI phycoerythrin (PE) ile Annexin V ise Allophycocyanin (APC) konjuge floresan boyalar ile işaretlidir. Hücrelerin bu boyalar ile işaretlenme özelliklerine göre hücrelerin durumunun nasıl belirlendiği aşağıdaki tabloda özetlenmiştir (Tablo 1).

Tablo 1. Annexin V/PI ile işaretlenen hücrelerin işaretlenme durumlarına göre sağlıklı, erken apoptotik, geç apoptotik ve nekrotik hücreler olarak değerlendirilme koşullarının gösterilmesi

Hücrelerin durumu	Annexin V	PI
Canlı ve sağlıklı	-	-
Erken apoptotik	+	-
Geç apoptotik	+	+
Nekrotik	-	+

Deney tasarısında belirtildiği üzere, hücre kültürü deneyleri sonlandırıldıktan sonra her bir bağımsız deneyden elde edilen hücre süspansiyonu ticari kitin belirttiği protokole uygun biçimde akım sitometrik analize hazırlanmıştır. Öncelikle, G1 grubuna ait hiçbir boya ile işaretlenmemiş 1×10^6 sayıda hücre, süspansiyon içerisinde debris niteliğinde parçalar olup olmadığını kontrol etmek amaçlı Forward Scatter Area (FSC-A) /Side Scatter Area (SSC-A) plotunda analiz edilmiş ve eğer debris var ise istenen özelliklerdeki popülasyon (P) P1 kapısı içerisine alınmıştır. P1 kapısı içerisine alınan örnekler daha sonra APC'ye karşın PE plotunda analiz edilerek, P1 kapısında bulunan işaret-siz hücrelerin APC ve PE lazerleri açısından negatif ışımaya verip vermediğini kontrol etmek için değerlendirilmiştir. İkili işaretlemeler (Annexin V ve PI) gerçekleştirilmeden önce, sadece Annexin V ve sadece PI işaretlemeleri yapılan hücreler analiz edilerek boyaaların özgünlüğü plot analizi ve voltaj özellikleri değerlendirilerek kontrol edilmiştir. Tüm kontroller gerçekleştirildikten sonra, 1×10^6 /ml konsantrasyonda hücre örnekleri kitin talimatlarına uygun biçimde Annexin ve PI boya ile ikili olarak işaretlenerek, akım sitometrik olarak analiz edilmiştir.

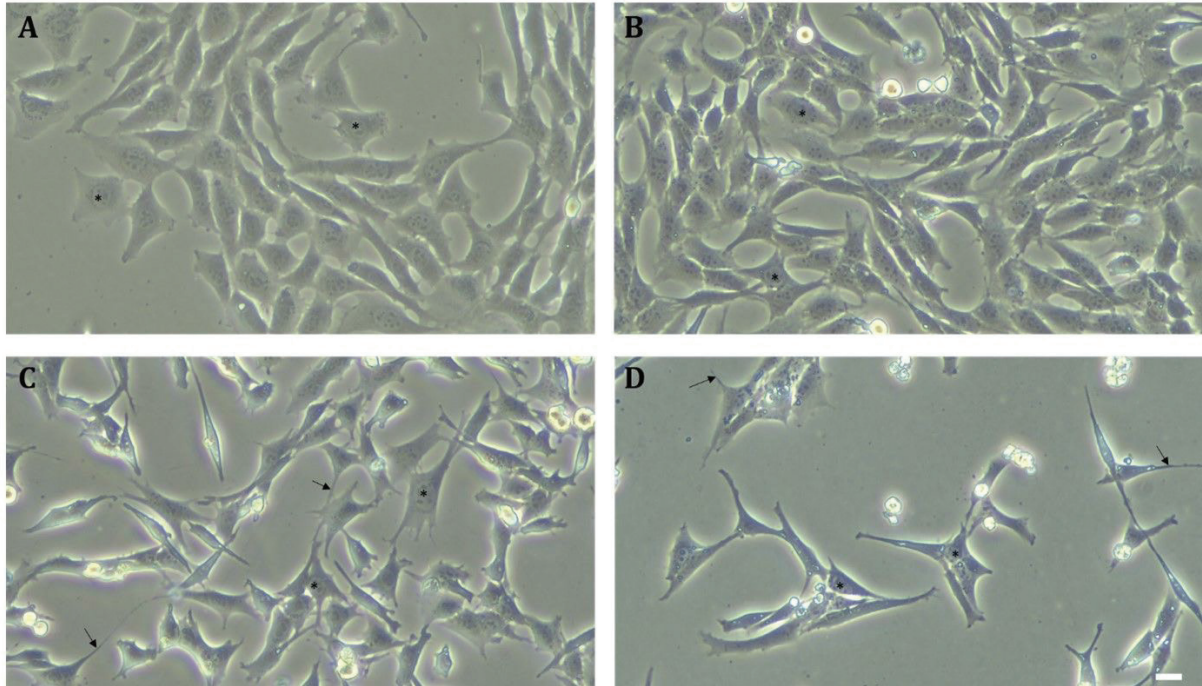
İstatistiksel Analiz

Her bir çalışma grubu altı bağımsız deneyden (n=6/grup) oluşacak şekilde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Normallik varsayımı Shapiro-Wilk testi ile sınanmıştır. Shapiro-Wilk testi sonucuna göre normal dağılım yok ise ($P<0.05$) non-parametrik (Kruskal-Wallis) var ise ($P>0.05$) parametrik (One-Way ANOVA) testler uygulanmıştır. Bu testler sonucunda istatistiksel olarak anlamlı fark ($P<0.05$) görülen veriler için, anlamlılığın hangi ikili gruplar arasında olduğunu tespit etmek için Bonferroni post-hoc testi uygulanmıştır. Analizler için IBM SPSS Statistics yazılımının ücretsiz deneme sürümü (26) kullanılmıştır. Non-parametrik analiz uygulanan veriler box-plot grafiği, parametrik uygulananlar ise ortalama \pm standart sapmayı temsil eden bar grafiği biçiminde sunulmuştur. İstatistiksel analizi tamamlanan verilerin grafikler haline dönüştürülmesi ve düzenlenmesi için Microsoft Office yazılımı kullanılmıştır.

BULGULAR

Elde edilen verilerin normal dağılımı incelendiğinde (Shapiro-Wilk testi), Geç Apoptozis testinin normal dağılıma uyduğu ($P<0.001$), Erken Apoptozis ($P>0.05$) ve Nekrozis ($P>0.05$) verilerinin uymadığı tespit edilmiştir. Dolayısıyla, Geç Apoptozis verilerinin istatistiksel analizi One-Way ANOVA (parametrik), Erken Apoptozis ve Nekrozis verileri ise Kruskal-Wallis (non-parametrik) testleriyle analiz edilmiştir.

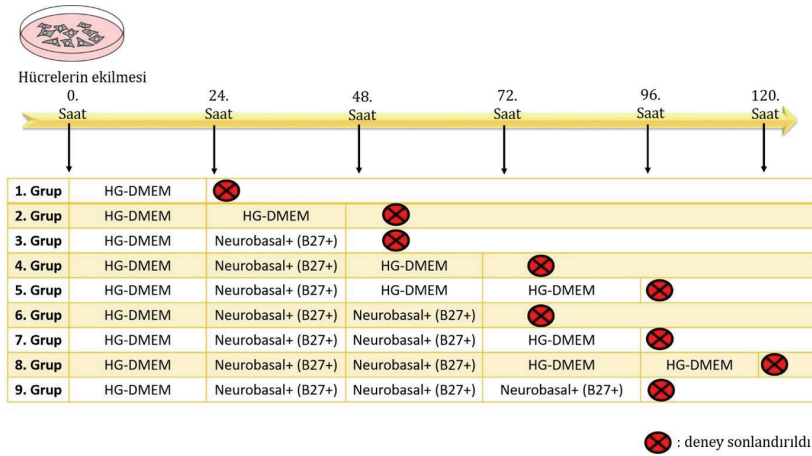
HT22 hücre hattı morfolojik olarak incelendiğinde, kontrol grubunun (G1) ökromatik nükleusa sahip, epiteloïd karakterde hücre morfolojisi sergilediği (Resim 1A), 2. Gruptaki (G2) hücrelerin de benzer bir morfolojide olduğu gözlenmiştir (Resim 1B). Farklandırma medyumuna eklenen gruplarda (G3-G9) ise özellikle 48 ve 72 saat süreyle muamele edilen farklandırma gruplarında daha belirgin olarak, nörit benzeri uzantılara rastlanmıştır (Resim 1C, D).



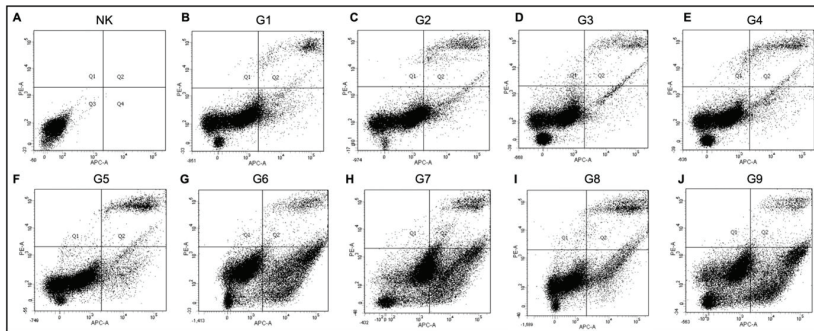
Resim 1. HT22 hücre hattının genel morfolojik ve farklandırma medyumları sonrasındaki görüntüsü. (A) Sadece HG-DMEM ile muamele edilen hücreler. (B) 24 saat farklandırma medyumuna muamele edilen hücreler. (C) 48 saat farklandırma medyumuna muamele edilen hücreler. (D) 72 saat farklandırma medyumuna muamele edilen hücreler. Nükleus (asterisk *), nörit benzeri uzantılar (siyah oklar). Objektif büyüklüğü 10X, ölçek 10µm.

Katkılı HG-DMEM medyum ile ekilip 24 saat tutunmaları için beklenen hücrelerin, değişik sürelerde farklanma medyumunu ile muamele edilmesi sonucu ölçülen erken apoptozis verileri incelendiğinde ise G6, G7 ve G9 gruplarındaki artışın, 1. Gruba (Kontrol, G1) göre (sırasıyla $P=0,010$, $P=0,011$ ve $P=0,015$) ve G3'e göre (sırasıyla $P<0,001$, $P<0,001$ ve $P=0,001$) istatistiksel olarak anlamlı olduğu tespit edilmiştir (Şekil 2, Şekil 3A). Geç apoptozisin, 1.

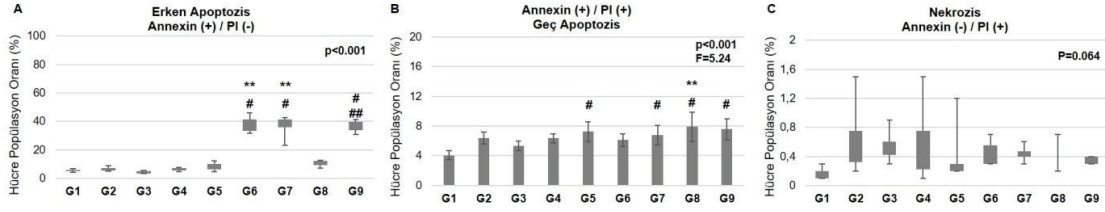
Gruba (Kontrol, G1) kıyasla G5, G7, G8 ve G9 gruplarında artış gösterdiği ve istatistiksel olarak anlamlı olduğu belirlenmiştir (sırasıyla $P=0,003$, $P=0,02$, $P=0,001$ ve $P=0,001$). Bu bulguların yanı sıra, G3'e göre G8'deki artışın da anlamlı olduğu tespit edilmiştir ($P=0,04$) (Şekil 2, Şekil 3B). Nekrozis verileri incelendiğinde ise gruplar arasında anlamlı herhangi bir fark bulunmamıştır (Şekil 2, Şekil 3C).



Şekil 1. Deney tasarımının şematik olarak gösterilmesi. HG-DMEM (yüksek glikoz katkılı DMEM; high glucose DMEM).



Şekil 2. Farklı gruplarda Annexin V/PI işaretlemesine göre; canlı ve sağlıklı, erken apoptozis, geç apoptozis ve nekrozis durumundaki HT22 hücre popülasyon dağılımları kadrantlar (Q1-Q4) içerisinde gösterilmiştir. (A) Negatif kontrol (NK), (B) G1 grubu, (C) G2 grubu, (D) G3 grubu, (E) G4 grubu, (F) G5 grubu, (G) G6 grubu, (H) G7 grubu, (I) G8 grubu, (J) G9 grubu. Q1: nekrotik hücre popülasyonu, Q2: geç apoptotik hücre popülasyonu, Q3: sağlıklı hücre popülasyonu, Q4: erken apoptotik hücre popülasyonu. (n=6/grup).



Şekil 3. HT22 hücrelerinin gruplar arası erken apoptozis (A), geç apoptozis (B) ve nekrozis oranları (C). (n=6/ grup). **Şekil 3A** için; (**: G3'e göre anlamlı, P<0,001, #: G1'e göre anlamlı, P<0,05, ##: G3'e göre anlamlı, P<0,05). **Şekil 3B** için; Farklı çalışma gruplarında Annexin V (+) / PI (+) işaretlemesine göre tespit edilen geç apoptozis durumundaki HT22 hücre popülasyon oranları ortalama \pm standart sapmayı temsil eden bar grafiğinde gösterilmiştir. (*: G1'e göre anlamlı, P<0,001, #: G1'e göre anlamlı, P<0,05, ##: G3'e göre anlamlı, P<0,05). **Şekil 3C** için; Farklı çalışma gruplarında Annexin V (-) / PI (+) işaretlemesine göre tespit edilen nekrotik HT22 hücre popülasyon oranları box-plot grafiği ile gösterilmiştir. Gruplar arasında nekrotik hücre popülasyonu açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir farklılık tespit edilmemiştir.

TARTIŞMA

Bu çalışmada fare HP dokusundan elde edilmiş HT22 hücrelerinin, nöronal farklandırmada ve primer nöron kültürü protokollerinde sıkça kullanılan B27+ katkısı içeren medyum bileşimine, zamana bağlı verdiği apoptotik ve nekrotik tepkinin ölçülmesi amaçlanmıştır¹⁴. Bu doğrultuda, in-vitro ortamda farklı süre ve kombinasyonlarda farklandırma medyumuna tabi tutulan HT22 hücrelerinde, Annexin V/PI işaretlemesi ile erken apoptozis, geç apoptozis ve nekrozis hücre popülasyon oranları karşılaştırılmıştır. Annexin V işaretlemesi, hücre membranının dış yüzüne geçmiş olan fosfatidilserin tespitini yani hücrenin erken apoptozis evresine geçişini işaret etmektedir^{15,16}. Kontrol grubuna (G1) veya 24 saat farklandırma ortamında tutulan hücelere (G3) kıyasla, 48 saat ve daha uzun farklandırma ortamında tutulan HT22 hücrelerinin (G6, G7, G9) daha yüksek oranda erken apoptozise uğradığı görülmüştür (Şekil 2, Şekil 3A). HT22 hücrelerinin, 24 saatlik farklandırma medyumuna ise anlamlı seviyede bir erken apoptotik tepki (G1/G3, P>0.05) oluşturmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Diğer yandan, Annexin V (+) ve PI (+) boyanan hücre popülasyon oranları değerlendirildiğinde farklandırma medyumunun kültür süresinden bağımsız olarak, HT22 hücrelerinde geç apop-

tozise yol açtığı anlaşılmıştır (Şekil 2, Şekil 3B). Membran hasarı ve DNA fragmentasyonları sebebiyle, geç apoptoziste geri döndürülemeyen hücre kayıpları oluşabildiği bilinmektedir¹⁷. Bazı gruplarda tespit ettiğimiz anlamlı geç apoptozis artışı, bu gruplardaki HT22 hücrelerinin farklandırma medyumuna karşı geliştirdiği intrinsik ve ekstrinsik yollarla aktive olabilen, caspase ailesine ait proteinlerin ifadelerini de etkilenmiş olabilir. HT22 hücre hattının nöronal farklılaşması üzerine temellerini oluşturacak çalışmalarda, caspase ailesi proteinlerin ifade seviyeleri, akım sitometrik, western-blot veya immünofloresan işaretleme yöntemleriyle ya da söz konusu proteinleri kodlayan genlerin mRNA ifadeleri kantitatif RT-PCR veya floresan in situ hibridizasyon vb. yöntemlerle tespit edilebilir.

PI molekülünün membran bütünlüğü bozulmuş haldeki hücrelerin DNA'sına bağlandığı ve PI pozitif hücrelerin nekrotik hücreler olarak kabul edildiği bilinmektedir¹⁸. Annexin V (-) ve PI (+) işaretlenen hücre popülasyon oranları incelendiğinde, farklandırma medyumunun HT22 hücreleri üzerinde kayda değer bir nekrotik etki oluşturmadığını göstermiştir (Şekil 2, Şekil 3C). Bununla birlikte, farklandırma medyumuna süreden bağımsız olarak geç apoptozis neden olurken nekrozisde herhangi bir artışa ned-

en olmaması da ilginç bir durumdur. Gerçekleştirdiğimiz akım sitometrik deneyler farklı süreler sonlandırılan kültür deneyleri sonrasında yapılmış olsa da farklandırma medyumunun HT22 hücrelerinin ölüm hızını nasıl etkilediği konusunda sınırlı bilgiler sunmaktadır. İlerleyen çalışmaların hücre ölüm hızı ya da hücre bölünme hızını gerçek zamanlı olarak analiz etme kapasitesine sahip yöntemler ile tüm deney süreleri boyunca hücrelerin farklandırma medyumuna verdiği süregelen tepkiler ölçülebilir.

HT22 hücrelerinin farklandırma medyumuna ile daha uzun süre kültüre edilmesine bağlı gözlemlendiğimiz erken apoptozis artışının ya da zamandan bağımsız olarak ortaya çıkan geç apoptozis artışının nöronal farklılaşma açısından ne ifade ettiği soru işaretidir. Bu bağlamda, fetal nörogenез sırasında programlanmış hücre ölümlerinin nöro-gliyal farklılaşma basamaklarının işlenmesine katkı sunduğu dikkat çekicidir^{19,20}. Erişkin rodentlerde nöral kök hücre oluşumundan elektrofizyolojik olarak aktif nöron oluşumuna kadar gerçekleşen dönüşüm basamakları sırasında hücre popülasyonunun yaklaşık olarak yarısının farklılaşmadan aynı basamakta kaldığı (nöral kök hücre havuzunu koruduğu) ya da apoptozise uğradığı da bilinmektedir^{21,22}. Dolayısıyla, doğal ortamında (fetal veya erişkin beyindeki nörojenik tabakalar) gerçekleşen nöronal farklılaşma basamakları sırasında programlı hücre ölümü olağan ve gerekli bir hücreyel olay olarak kabul edilebilir.

HT22 hücre hattının HP dokusu kaynaklı bir hücre hattı olması sebebiyle, hipokampal nörogenез sırasında gerçekleşen nöronal farklılaşmanın modellenmesi açısından makul bir model adayı olarak kabul edilebilir. Ancak HT22 hücrelerinin nöronal farklandırma kültür ortamlarındaki hücreyel ve moleküler davranışlarına ait oldukça az bilgi bulunmaktadır. Literatür incelendiğinde HT22 hücre hattını nöral farklılaşma modeli olarak kullanılabileceğini gösteren çok az sayıda araştırma olduğu görülmüştür²³⁻²⁶. Bu çalışmalarda, HT22 hücreleri N2 ve/veya B27 katkısı içeren NB ile kültüre edildiğinde, nöral karakterde olan bu hücrelerin kolinerjik nöron özel-

liklerini gösterdiği raporlanmıştır²³⁻²⁵. Bu çalışmalarda, HT22 hücrelerinin farklandırılarak kazandıkları nöronal fenotipler gösterilmiş olsa da hücrelerin bu medyumlara karşı verdiği apoptotik yanıt değerlendirilmemiştir. Ayrıca sadece bu çalışmalardan elde edilen bilgiler sonucunda HT22 hücrelerinin nöronal farklılaşmanın hangi aşamasında olduğunu ya da hücrelerdeki olgunlaşmanın derecesinin anlaşılması açısından da yeterli bilgiler sunmamaktadır²³⁻²⁵.

Bu çalışmada elde edilen, HT22 hücrelerinde, farklandırma medyumuna karşı zamana bağlı oluşan erken veya geç evre apoptotik tepkilere ait bilgiler, HT22 hücreleri ile farklandırma protokolleri uygulayacak araştırmacılara faydalı bir temel sağlamaktadır. Ancak ilerleyen çalışmalarda caspase bağımlı apoptotik tepkilerin de ölçülmesi bu çalışmada elde edilen, HT22 hücrelerin nöronal farklandırmaya karşı verdiği apoptotik tepkilerin daha kapsamlı biçimde anlaşılmasına yardımcı olabilir.

Sonuç olarak, literatürde sıklıkla kullanılmakta olan HT22 hücrelerinin nöronal farklılaşma medyumuna verdiği süreye bağlı apoptotik yanıtın değerlendirilmesi, basit ve yaygın olarak kabul gören bir yöntem ile incelenmiştir. Bu çalışma ile birçok araştırmacının konusunu oluşturan, nöronal farklılaşma mekanizmalarının devreye girmesiyle ilk basamakta proliferasyona uğrayan hücrelerin farklanma basamakları ilerledikçe programlı bir biçimde apoptoza uğraması ve farklılaşmayı tamamlayıp post-mitotik olgun nöronlar oluşturması şeklinde ilerleyen nörogenез sırasında gerçekleşen nöronal apoptoz ve bu olayın mekanizmasının daha iyi olarak anlaşılması açısından bazı soruları cevapladığı düşünülebilir.

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Relationship between Hematological Inflammatory Markers and General Characteristics in Operable Cervical Cancer; State of the HALP Index

Ameliyat Edilebilir Rahim Ağzı Kanserinde Hematolojik İnflamatuvar Belirteçler ile Genel Özellikler Arasındaki İlişki; HALP İndeksinin Yeri

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Abstract

Introduction	Cervical cancer is the most common gynecologic malignancy and the leading cause of cancer-related mortality in women worldwide. Systemic inflammatory reactions in cancer patients impact nutrition, function, and prognosis. Poor nutritional health is linked to a worse prognosis in several malignancies. A new score called the hemoglobin-albumin-lymphocyte-platelet (HALP) index was developed using dietary and inflammatory deficiencies.
Materials and Methods	This retrospective study and CC patients diagnosed from January 2012 to December 2020 who were operated for cervical cancer. Pre-treatment hemoglobin (Hb), albumin (Alb), lymphocyte count (Lc), and platelet (Plt) measurements were made for laboratory research.
Results	This retrospective study revealed 74 non-metastatic cervical cancer (median age was 55, ranging from 30 to 86 years). According to the FIGO stage, the percentage of stages 1 and 2 were 78% (58 patients), and 22% (16 patients). Neutrophil lymphocyte ratio (NLR) and platelet lymphocyte ratio (PLR), and HALP index were analyzed with LVSI, parametrial invasion, tumor size, histologic type, and duration of hospital stay; we could not find any significant correlation between the analysis.
Conclusion	NLR, PLR, and HALP index have no prognostic value in early operable cervical cancer patients regarding the pathologic features. Prospective multicenter and more patient studies will clarify how the hematologic parameters affect oncologic outcomes.
Keywords	HALP index, Cervical Cancer, Hematologic parameters, Prognostic value.

Öz

Amaç	Rahim ağzı kanseri en yaygın jinekolojik malignitedir ve dünya çapında kadınlarda kansere bağlı ölümlerin önde gelen nedenidir. Kanser hastalarında sistemik inflamatuvar reaksiyonlar beslenmeyi, fonksiyonları ve prognozu etkiler. Kötü beslenme sağlığı, birçok kanserde kötü prognozla bağlantılıdır. Hemoglobin-albümin-lenfosit-trombosit (HALP) indeksi adı verilen yeni bir skor, diyet ve inflamatuvar belirteçleri kullanılarak geliştirilen bir indekstir.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Bu retrospektif çalışma Ocak 2012-Aralık 2020 tarihleri arasında serviks kanseri nedeniyle opere edilen SK hastalarını retrospektif incelemiştir. Laboratuvar araştırması için tedavi öncesi hemoglobin (Hb), albümin (Alb), lenfosit sayısı (Lc) ve trombosit (Plt) ölçümleri yapıldı.
Bulgular	Bu retrospektif çalışma, 74 metastatik olmayan serviks kanserinden oluşmaktaydı (medyan yaş 55, 30 ila 86 arasındaydı). FIGO evresine göre evre 1 ve 2'nin yüzdesi %78 (58 hasta), %22 (16 hasta) idi. Nötrofil lenfosit oranı (NLR) ve trombosit lenfosit oranı (PLR) ve HALP indeksi, LVSI, parametrial invazyon, tümör boyutu, histolojik tip ve hastanede kalış süresi ile analiz edildi; sonuç olarak analizler arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulamadık.
Sonuç	NLR, PLR ve HALP indeksinin erken edilebilir serviks kanseri hastalarında patolojik özellikler açısından prognostik değeri yoktu. Prospektif çok merkezli ve daha fazla hasta sayısından oluşan çalışmalar, hematolojik parametrelerin onkolojik sonuçları nasıl etkilediğini netleştirecektir.
Anahtar Kelimeler	HALP indeksi, serviks kanseri, hematolojik belirteçler, prognostik değer



INTRODUCTION

Cervical cancer (CC) is the most prevalent gynecologic malignancy and the main reason for cancer-related death in women globally. More than 600 000 new cases and approximately 342 000 deaths from CC were recorded in 2020, accounting for 7.7% of all female cancer-related mortality. Based on the disease stage, metastasis, or recurrence, several therapeutic techniques may improve the prognosis for CC. Patients with early-stage cervical squamous cell carcinoma typically undergo a radical hysterectomy and pelvic lymph node dissection for curative intent. Many recent research studies have examined the connection between inflammatory markers and cervical cancer. Several inflammatory markers have been linked to cervical cancer, and inflammation is a significant factor in the initiation and progression of cancer.

Recent studies have demonstrated that inflammatory markers associated to the tumor microenvironment have a significant prognostic value for various solid cancers. Systemic inflammatory reactions in cancer patients impact nutrition, function, and prognosis. Poor nutritional health is linked to a worse prognosis in several malignancies. The neutrophil-to-lymphocyte ratio (NLR) is a recognized indicator of patient survival for cancer. Also, It has been demonstrated that decreased survival in gynecological malignancies is associated with elevated NLRs prior to treatment. High NLR has been linked to the advanced stage, a short disease-free survival time, and poor overall survival (OS) in cervical cancer. The platelet-to-lymphocyte ratio (PLR) is a reliable marker of systemic inflammatory response. According to reports, PLR has an impact on the prognosis and effectiveness of treatment for a variety of malignancies, including ovarian cancer, gastric cancer, oesophageal cancer, and breast cancer. The likelihood of malignant tumor development and metastasis increases with higher PLR, which leads to a poor prognosis. Characteristics like age, tumor size, clinical stage, and lymph node metastases influence the prognosis of cervical cancer. Few studies focus on PLR as a predictor of cervical cancer,

and they have conflicting results.

A new score called the hemoglobin-albumin-lymphocyte-platelet (HALP) index was developed using dietary and inflammatory deficiencies. In addition, utilizing this index may improve the accuracy of various cancer prognoses. There are only a few data about the HALP index and CC, but to our knowledge, there needs to be research about how this indicator had a prognostic value of CC in the Turkish Population.

MATERIALS and METHODS

Study Selection: After receiving approval from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Medicine, Kocaeli University (GOKAEK 2021-253), this retrospective study was carried out, which waived the requirement for written informed consent due to the study's retrospective nature. The confidentiality of patient data was guaranteed, as required by the Ethics Committee, and the Declaration of Helsinki conducted the study. CC patients diagnosed from January 2012 to December 2020 who operated for cervical cancer. FIGO stages 1a, 1b, and a selected stage 2 were the inclusion criteria. The study group includes histological categories of squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), adenocarcinoma (AD), or adenosquamous carcinoma (ASC). Receiving neoadjuvant therapy, two main malignancies, unintentional cancer (unexpected cervical cancer diagnosis following straightforward hysterectomy for a benign illness), pregnancy, any current infection, and insufficient HALP data were the exclusion criteria.

Data collection: Age, comorbidities (hypertension, diabetes, dyslipidemia), stage, histological type by World Health Organization (WHO) standards, tumor size, and treatment method were all gathered from the hospital database. Pre-treatment hemoglobin (Hb), albumin (Alb), lymphocyte count (Lc), and platelet (Plt) measurements were made for laboratory research.

The following equation was used to determine the HALP

index: Hb (g/L) x Alb (g/L) x Lymphocyte count (Lc)/ Platelet count (Pc) SPSS version 23.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL) was used for statistical analysis. To find the best sensitive specific cutoff value to predict associated parameters, ROC curves of the parameters were created for the pre-treatment NLR, PLR, and HALP index. The features of patients with and without relevant invasion and hematologic parameters were compared using the Pearson 2 test, the Fisher exact test, the independent T-test, and binary logistic regression analysis. The correlation between the variables was determined using Spearman's rho. The acceptable p-value cutoff for statistical significance was 0.05.

RESULTS

This retrospective study revealed 74 non-metastatic cervical cancer (median age was 55, ranging from 30 to 86 years). Other general characteristics are presented in Table 1. All patients were treated with modified radical hysterectomy or total abdominal hysterectomy, including bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy. According to the FIGO stage, the percentage of stages 1 and 2 were 78% (58 patients), and 22% (16 patients), as presented in Figure 1.

Table 1. General characteristics of the study population			
Characteristics	Mean/Median Value	Standard Deviation/IR range	P value
Age, years	55	11/30-86	
Hemoglobin gr/dl	12,4	1,2	
Platelet	283	84	
WBC, x10 ⁶ cells/gr	8,200	3,0	
Neutrophil, x10 ⁶ cells/gr	5,200	2,500	
Albumin g/dl	4	1.2	
NLR-pre	2,1	0,5-15	
NLR-post	5,7	1,2-30	<0.001
PLR-pre	126	20-300	
PLR-post	165	47-450	<0.001
HALP-pre	41	15-200	
HALP-post	19	7-120	<0.001
NLR: neutrophil-lymphocyte ratio, PLR: platelet lymphocyte ratio,			

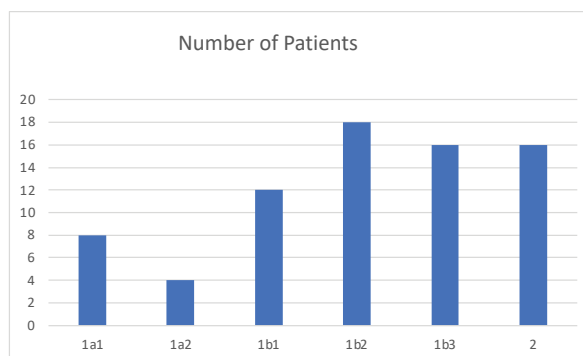


Figure 1: Patients distribution according to the stages.

Nineteen patients (25%) had adenocarcinoma, 26 patients (35%) had keratinized squamous cell carcinoma, 26 patients (35%) had non-keratinized squamous cell carcinoma, and the remaining three patients (4%) had other types (mixt type and neuroendocrine) diagnoses. Fifteen patients (20%) had parametrial invasion, 35 patients (47%) had a smaller than 2 cm tumor size, and 17 patients (23%) had a bigger than 4 cm tumor size. Twenty patients (27%) had a lymphovascular invasion.

Neutrophil lymphocyte ratio (NLR) significantly increased following the operation. Still, none of them showed a significant correlation between the pathologic parameters such as FIGO stage, parametrial invasion, T stage, and LVSI (p values were 0.3, 0.43, 0.9, and 0.26 preoperative and 0.19, 0.3, 0.07 and 0.9 postoperative term respectively). Similar to NLR, platelet lymphocyte ratio (PLR) could not show a significant correlation between the pathologic parameters (p values were 0.16, 0.24, 0.1, and 0.7 preoperative and 0.25, 0.4, 0.29 and 0.4 postoperative term respectively)

HALP index was analyzed with LVSI, parametrial invasion, tumor size, histologic type, and duration of hospital stay; we could not find any significant correlation between the analysis (presented in Table 2).

Table 2. Correlation Coefficient

Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age, years								
2. Hospital Stay duration, days	Pearson Correlation	,370**						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,001						
3.Stage I and II	Pearson Correlation	,351**	,253*					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,002	0,030					
4.Parametrial invasion	Pearson Correlation	-,308**	-0,229	-,889**				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,008	0,050	0,000				
5.T stage, cm	Pearson Correlation	-0,067	-0,056	0,189	-,237*			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,568	0,633	0,107	0,042			
6. LVSI	Pearson Correlation	-0,035	0,040	-,364**	,450**	-,272*		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,769	0,735	0,001	0,000	0,019		
7. HALP pre	Pearson Correlation	0,083	0,073	0,147	-0,162	-0,133	-0,049	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,484	0,537	0,210	0,168	0,257	0,680	
8. HALP post	Pearson Correlation	0,022	-0,077	0,023	0,025	-0,182	0,087	,288*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,850	0,515	0,845	0,833	0,120	0,463	0,013

N:74, **, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)., *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).LVSI: lympho-vascular space invasion,

Also, we analyzed FIGO stages 1a1, 1a2, 1b1, 1b2, 1b3, and stage 2 between the relation with NLR, PLR, and HALP index, but there were no significant relations with all parameters. In addition, we check all parameters before the operation and postoperation term. Both measurements did not show significant relations.

DISCUSSION

The present study found that patients diagnosed with early-stage cervical cancer had no significant relationship with hematologic inflammatory markers such as NLR, PLR, and HALP index, a new biomarker of nutrition and inflammation in the Turkish population.

Neutrophils can be mechanically attracted to the tumor microenvironment, release proliferative factors, and inhibit T-lymphocyte activity, which promotes tumor progression, invasion, angiogenesis, and metastasis. The NLR is an independent predictive biomarker in several malignancies and is a systemic inflammatory indicative of the balance between antitumor immune response and pro-tumor inflammation. While Zhang et al. demonstrated a

link between preoperative NLR and unfavorable histological features and prognosis in cervical cancer patients who had surgery. Lima et al. revealed a negative association between NLR and prognosis in cervical cancer. In another study, Li et al. revealed that higher NLR was substantially linked with shorter OS and PFS, according to both univariate and multivariate survival analyses in stage IIB cervical cancer. Both studies have investigated late-stage cervical cancer compared to our research.

The platelet-to-lymphocyte ratio, or PLR, is a specific hematological measure that reflects the systemic inflammatory response. Reactive thrombocytosis, which occurs more frequently in solid tumors, is one aspect of the inflammatory response involving platelets. The host's systemic inflammatory response level is related to thrombocytosis and lymphopenia. A high PLR denotes either a relative drop in lymphocyte count or an increase in platelet count. Numerous studies have shown that PLR can be a poor prognostic factor for various malignant tumors and an indicator for assessing the immune function state. Gao et al. found that for the high PLR (PLR > 186.88) and low PLR

(PLR 186.88) groups, the 3-year OS values were 81.00% and 97.10%, respectively, while the 3-year PFS values were 59.50% and 88.20%, respectively in patients who treated with radiotherapy. Only 12% of patients in this study had FIGO stage 1 disease, and most were in an advanced stage. The Hemoglobin, Albumin, Lymphocyte, and Platelet (HALP) Index is a novel rating system that considers both nutritional condition and inflammation. It has been discovered that this index can increase the prognosis prediction accuracy for various malignancies. In a recent study, according to the survival curve, patients with low HALP scores (HALP score 39.50) in the two cohorts had significantly lower RFS rates and overall survival rates than patients with high HALP scores (HALP score 39.50) in operable cervical cancer patients. However, the HALP score alone had no substantial prognostic value for cervical cancer recurrence. To our knowledge this was the first extensive research HALP index and cervical cancer, and the authors concluded that a potential predictor for cervical cancer recurrence may be the HALP score. Cervical cancer recurrence can be more accurately predicted using a nomogram model based on the HALP score and traditional clinicopathological criteria.

Our study has significant limitations, such as comparing the hematologic parameters with pathologic features. We could not investigate the oncologic outcomes or survival rates. Also, this was single-center retrospective data, and we need to find more patients. Nonetheless, this preliminary research is the first investigation of the Turkish population's HALP index with cervical cancer.

In conclusion, NLR, PLR, and HALP index have no prognostic value in early operable cervical cancer patients regarding the pathologic features. Prospective multicenter and more patient studies will clarify how the hematologic parameters affect oncologic outcomes.

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Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Müdahale Çalışması: Eczacılık ve Eğitim Fakültesi Örneği

Health Literacy Intervention Study: The Example of The Faculty of Pharmacy and Education

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Öz

Amaç	Sağlık eğitiminin, eczacılık ve okul öncesi öğretmenliği (OÖÖ) bölümleri arasındaki sağlık okuryazarlığı (SOY) düzeylerine olan etkilerinin tespit edilmesi ve elde edilen sonuçlar doğrultusunda önerilerin sunulması amaçlanmıştır.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Sağlık eğitimi sonrası sağlık okuryazarlığı (SOY) düzeylerindeki değişimi belirlemek üzere yapılmış bir müdahale çalışmasıdır. Evreni oluşturan toplam 256 öğrenciden 197'si önce tabakalı örnekleme yöntemi ile bölümlerine göre belirlendi, daha sonra uygun sayıda öğrenci sistematik örnekleme yöntemi ile seçildi. Araştırmada literatür doğrultusunda hazırlanan 12 soruluk anket formu, Türkiye Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Ölçeği-32 (TSOY-32), Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Senaryo Ölçeği (SOY-SEN), Sağlık Algısı Ölçeği kullanıldı.
Bulgular	Araştırmaya %57,9 (n:114)'u kız, %42,1 (n:83)'i erkek olmak üzere toplam 197 öğrenci katıldı. Araştırma grubuna uygulanan TSOY-32 ölçeği toplam puanı 86,11±19,57'dir. Bölüm puanları incelendiğinde eczacılık fakültesi ortalaması 91,50±16,47, OÖÖ bölümü ortalaması 82,79±20,62 olarak bulundu. Araştırma grubunun SOY-SEN ölçeği toplam puanı ortalaması 46,64±25,23'tür. Bölümlere göre SOY-SEN toplam puanları incelendiğinde, eczacılık bölümü öğrencilerinin SOY-SEN toplam puan ortalaması 55,16±25,21 iken, OÖÖ bölümü öğrencilerinin toplam puan ortalaması 41,41±23,88 olarak bulundu. Bölümlerin TSOY-32 alt sınıfları ölçeğinin ve SOY-SEN ölçeğinin eğitim sonrası puanları, eğitim öncesi ölçek puanlarına göre anlamlı olarak daha yüksek bulundu (p<0,001).
Sonuç	Sağlık eğitimi sonrası Eczacılık bölümü ve OÖÖ bölümü öğrencilerinin yetersiz ve sorunlu-sınırlı SOY düzeyleri azaltırken, yeterli ve mükemmel SOY düzeyleri artış gösterdi. Bununla beraber çalışmada sağlık algısı düzeyleri ile SOY düzeyleri arasında pozitif yönlü bir ilişki saptandı.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Sağlık okuryazarlığı; sağlık eğitimi; müdahale çalışması; Türkiye sağlık okuryazarlığı ölçeği-32; sağlık okuryazarlığı senaryo ölçeği; sağlık algısı ölçeği

Abstract

Introduction	It is aimed to determine the effects of health education on health literacy (HL) levels between pharmacy and pre-school teachers and to present the proposals in the direction of the obtained results.
Materials and Methods	It is an intervention study to determine the change in health literacy levels after health education. Of the total 256 students who formed the population, 197 were identified by their stratified sampling method and then the appropriate number of students were selected by systematic sampling. A questionnaire consisting of 12 questions prepared according to the literature, Turkey Health Literacy Scale-32 (THLS-32), Health Literacy Scenario Scale (HLSS), Health Perception Scale was used in the study.
Results	A total of 197 students participated in the study, 57.9% (n: 114) female and 42.1% (n: 83) male. The total score of HLSS-32 scale was 86.11 ± 19.57. When the faculty scores were examined, the mean of the faculty of pharmacy was 91.50 ± 16.47, and the mean of the faculty of pre-school teacher was 82.79 ± 20.62. The mean score of HLSS scale of the study group was 46.64 ± 25.23. When the HLSS total scores were examined according to the departments, the HLSS total score of the students in the pharmacy faculty was 55.16 ± 25.21 and 41.41 ± 23.88 in the pre-school teacher faculty. Post-education scores of THLS-32 subscales and HLSS scale were significantly higher than pre-education scale scores (p<0.001).
Conclusion	While the inadequate and problematic HL levels of the students in the pharmacy department and the preschool teacher department decreased after the health education, sufficient and excellent HL levels were increased. However, a positive correlation was found between the level of HL with health perception levels in the study.
Keywords	Health literacy; health education; intervention study; Turkey health literacy scale-32; scenario health literacy scale; health perception scale



GİRİŞ

Toplumsal yaşama katılım sağlayabilmeyi, evrende var olan döngüyü anlamlandırabilmeyi ve bireysel edinimlerimizi artırabilmeyi sağlayan becerilerden biri ve belki de en önemli okuryazar olmaktadır.¹

Sağlık Okuryazarlığı (SOY) tanımında uygun sağlık kararları vermek için gereken temel sağlık bilgilerini ve hizmetlerini edinme, işleme, anlama, uygulayabilme, karar verebilme ve iletişim kurabilme öğeleri yer almaktadır.²⁻⁷ SOY düzeyini arttırmak için kullanılan başlıca bilgiye erişim kaynakları sağlık profesyonelleri, tıp literatürü, tıp/ sağlık kitapları ve dergileri, internet ve televizyon gibi kitle iletişim araçlarından oluşmaktadır.⁸ Kişilerin sağlık okuryazarlığı becerisi, içerisinde yaşadıkları sosyal ve kültürel ortamlardan etkilenmektedir. Bu nedenle sağlık okuryazarlığının geliştirilmesi için bilginin kazanıldığı kişisel ve sosyal ortamlarda da geniş kapsamlı fırsatların sunulması gerekmektedir.² İnsanların yaşam boyu öğrenmelerini teşvik edecek müdahalelerin (ister yapılandırılmış eğitimler olsun, ister günlük okuma veya bilgisayar becerilerini kazanma gibi günlük aktiviteler olsun) sağlık okuryazarlığı becerilerinin geliştirilmesini kolaylaştıracağı düşünülmektedir.^{2,9}

SOY becerisinin geliştirilmesi, bireyin kendi sağlığı ile ilgili kararları doğru alabilmesi, sağlığa ilişkin mesajları doğru algılaması ve uygulaması hem hastalıkların tedavisi, hem de hastalıklardan korunmada önemli yer tutmaktadır. Yetersiz ve sınırlı SOY düzeyi olan bireyler, yeterli SOY düzeyine sahip bireylere göre değerlendirildiğinde, gereksiz hastane masraflarının arttığı, hastane yatış sürelerinin uzadığı, gereksiz tetkik yaptırma oranlarının daha yüksek olduğu bilinmektedir. Ayrıca, bu bireylerin gereksiz acil servis kullanımlarının da arttığı görülmektedir. Tüm bu nedenler işgücü kayıplarına ve artmış sağlık harcamalarına neden olmaktadır.^{3,8-11} Ayrıca bireylerin SOY düzeyi ile sağlık yönetimleri arasındaki ilişkiye bakıldığı zaman, yetersiz veya sınırlı SOY düzeyi olan bireylerin, yeterli SOY düzeyi olan bireylere göre koruyucu sağlık hizmetlerini

daha az kullandıkları ve kronik hastalık yönetimlerinin daha kötü olduğu görülmektedir. Bu bireylerin, mortalite ve morbidite oranları da daha yüksek olarak belirtilmektedir.^{3,13,14}

Sağlık okuryazarlığının toplumun önemli bir bölümünü etkilediği, önlenebilir bir problem olduğu ve bu konuda bireylerin, sağlık çalışanlarının, yöneticilerin, politikacıların yapabilecekleri çalışmalar olduğu literatürde yoğun olarak yer almaktadır.¹⁵ SOY'a bütün-devlet ve bütün-toplum anlayışı ile yaklaşmak gerekmektedir. Sağlık okuryazarlığı sadece bireylerin, politikacıların veya sektör içerisindeki profesyonellerin sorumluluğunda olmamakta; birden çok mesleği ve sektörü ilgilendirmektedir. Sorunun çözümü multidisipliner bir yaklaşım gerektirir. Sağlık okuryazarlığının tespitine ve geliştirilmesine yönelik girişimler günlük hayatın içerisine entegre edilmelidir.^{2,10}

DSÖ SOY düzeyini yükseltmek ve sağlık bilincini geliştirme için şu yaklaşımları önermektedir:

1. SOY eğitimi erken çocukluk döneminden itibaren verilmelidir.
2. Sağlığın geliştirilmesi kavramı okul eğitimi sırasında geliştirilmelidir.
3. Yetişkin dönemdeki eğitimde olası engellerle baş etme yolları geliştirilmelidir.
4. Bireylerin özelliklerine ve kapasitelerine uygun çok yönlü programlar yapılmalıdır.
5. Katılımcı eğitim yöntemleri kullanılmalıdır.
6. Sağlıklı olmak ve iyilik hali için yeni yöntemler geliştirilmelidir.²

Bu çalışmada eczacılık ve Okul Öncesi Öğretmenliği (OÖÖ) bölümlerinde okuyan gençlerin SOY ve sağlık algısı düzeylerinin belirlenmesi, SOY düzeylerini etkileyen sosyo-demografik ve ekonomik faktörlerin saptanması ve sağlık eğitiminin SOY düzeylerine etkilerinin ortaya çıkarılması amaçlanmıştır.

GEREÇ ve YÖNTEMLER

Bu çalışma 1 Kasım - 15 Aralık 2017 tarihleri arasında Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi (YYÜ) Eczacılık ve Eğitim Fakültesinde yapılan sağlık eğitimi sonrası SOY düzeylerindeki değişimi belirlemek üzere bir müdahale çalışması olarak gerçekleştirildi. Araştırmanın evrenini Van YYÜ Eczacılık Fakültesi 1. sınıfta eğitim gören 57 öğrenci, 5. Sınıfta eğitim gören 39 öğrenci ve Van YYÜ Eğitim Fakültesi Okul Öncesi Öğretmenliği (OÖÖ) Bölümü 1. sınıfta eğitim gören 82 öğrenci ve 4. sınıfta eğitim gören 78 öğrenci olmak üzere toplam 256 öğrenci oluşturdu.

Araştırmanın örneklem büyüklüğü Epi Info version 7.0 programında daha önce yapılan çalışmalara göre yetersiz sağlık okuryazarlığı prevalansı %27,2, hata payı %3 olacak şekilde %95 güven aralığında 197 kişi olarak hesaplandı. 16 Evreni oluşturan toplam 256 öğrenciden 197'si önce tabakalı örnekleme yöntemi ile bölümlerine göre belirlendi, daha sonra uygun sayıda öğrenci sistematik örnekleme yöntemi ile seçildi.

Veri Toplama Araçları

Araştırmada literatür doğrultusunda hazırlanan 12 soruluk demografik özellikleri (yaş, cinsiyet, medeni durum, sosyal güvence, yaşadığı yer, en uzun süre yaşadığı yer) içeren anket formu, Türkiye Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Ölçeği (TSOY-32), Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Senaryo Ölçeği (SOY-SEN) ve Sağlık Algısı Ölçeği kullanıldı.

Türkiye Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Ölçeği (TSOY-32)

TSOY-32, on beş yaş üzeri ve okuryazar olan kişilerde sağlık okuryazarlığını değerlendirmek amacıyla Okyay ve Abacıgil tarafından 2016 yılında geliştirilmiş öz bildirim ölçeğidir.¹⁶ Ölçeğin genel iç tutarlık katsayısı 0,927'dir. Her madde 1 = Çok kolay, 2 = Kolay, 3 = Zor, 4 = Çok zor olacak şekilde dört derecedir. "Fikrim yok" ifadesi için 5 kodu kullanılmıştır. Ölçekte 0 puan en düşük sağlık okuryazarlığını, 50 puan ise en yüksek sağlık okuryazarlığını göstermektedir. Sağlık okuryazarlığı düzeyi, elde edilen puana göre dört kategoride değerlendirilmiştir:(0-25)

puan: Yetersiz SOY, (>25-33) puan: Sorunlu – Sınırlı SOY, (>33-42) puan: Yeterli SOY, (>42-50) puan: Mükemmel SOY.

Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Senaryo Ölçeği (SOY-SEN)

SOY-SEN, on beş yaş üzeri ve okuryazar olan kişilerde sağlık okuryazarlığını değerlendirmek amacıyla geliştirilmiş öz bildirim ölçeğinin ilk sürümüdür. Bilgiye ulaşma, anlama, karar verme ve uygulama süreçlerini değerlendiren 4 senaryo geliştirilmiştir. Her senaryo için dört soru oluşturulmuştur. Her soru için beş ifadeye yer verilmektedir. Bu ifadelerden biri tam doğru olup "5" puandır. İki ifade kısmen doğrudur; yani eksik bilgi içermektedir. Bu ifadeler "+2" ve "+3" olacak şekilde puanlanmaktadır. İki ifade ise tamamen yanlış olup, "-5" puandır. Her bir sorudan alınabilecek en yüksek puan "+10"; en düşük puan "-10" olabilmektedir. Dört senaryodan alınabilecek toplam puan "+120", en düşük puan "- 120" olabilmektedir.¹⁶

Sağlık Algısı Ölçeği

Sağlık Algısı Ölçeği 2007 yılında Diamond ve ark. tarafından geliştirilmiştir.¹⁷ Ölçek on beş madde ve dört alt faktörden oluşan beşli likert tipi bir ölçektir. 1, 5, 9, 10, 11 ve 14. maddeler olumlu tutum, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13 ve 15. Maddeler ise olumsuz tutum ifadeleridir. Ölçekten alınabilecek en az puan 15, en çok puan 75'tir. Ölçeğin alt gruplarına göre Cronbach Alpha Değerleri: kontrol merkezi 0,90; öz farkındalık 0,91; kesinlik 0,91; sağlığın önemi 0,82'dir. Ölçeğin Türkçe geçerlilik ve güvenilirliği 2012'de Kadioğlu ve Yıldız tarafından yapılmıştır.¹⁸

Verilerin Toplanması ve Uygulama

Araştırmacı tarafından verilen soru formları araştırmacı eşliğinde çalışmanın örnekleme olarak alınan 197 öğrenci tarafından sınıflarında dolduruldu. Ardından araştırmacı tarafından SOY konulu 45 slayttan oluşan 30 dakika süren, power-point sunu şeklinde eğitim verildi ve konuyla ilgili sorular cevaplandı. Örneklemedeki öğrencilere ulaşabilmek için eczacılık bölümüne 5, OÖÖ bölümünde 5 kez olmak üzere toplam 10 kez eğitim verildi. Eğitimler verildikten

10 gün sonra TSOY-32 ve SOY-SEN Ölçekleri tekrarlandı.

Araştırma için Van YYÜ Tıp Fakültesi Etik Kurulundan 24.10.2017/02 tarih ve karar numarası ile etik kurul onayı, Van YYÜ Eczacılık Fakültesi Dekanlığı ve Eğitim Fakültesi Dekanlığından kurumsal izin alındı. Ayrıca anket uygulanacak bireylerin sözlü onamları alındı.

Veri Analizi

Araştırmanın veri girişi ve analizleri Van YYÜ Lisanslı SPSS 22.0 istatistik programı ile yapıldı. Ölçüm değerlerinin analizinde, kategorik değişkenlerin karşılaştırılmasında ki-kare ve Fisher'in kesinlik testi, iki bağımsız değişken olduğu gruplarda parametrik test koşulları sağlanıyorsa; Student t testi, sağlanmıyorsa; Mann-Whitney U testi, iki den fazla bağımsız değişkenin olduğu gruplarda parametrik test koşulları sağlanıyorsa; ANOVA varyans analizi, sağlanmıyorsa; Kruskal Wallis testi yapıldı. Bağımlı gruplarda Wilcoxon Testi ve Marjinal Homojenlik Testi yapıldı. Bağımsız değişkenler ile ölçekler arasındaki ilişki Spearman Korelasyon testi kullanılarak analiz edildi. $P < 0,05$ anlamlı kabul edildi.

BULGULAR

Araştırmaya %57,9 (n:114)'u kız, %42,1 (n:83)'i erkek olmak üzere toplam 197 öğrenci katıldı. Öğrencilerin %38,1 (n:75)'i eczacılık bölümünde, %61,9 (n:122)'u okul öncesi öğretmenliği bölümünde eğitimini sürdürmektedir. Öğrencilerin yaş ortanca değeri 22'dir (min:18, max:40). Öğrencilerin tanımlayıcı özelliklerinin fakülte ve sınıflarına göre dağılımı tablo 1'de gösterildi.

Araştırma grubuna uygulanan TSOY-32 ölçeği toplam puanı $86,11 \pm 19,57$ 'dir. Bölüm puanları incelendiğinde eczacılık fakültesi ortalaması $91,50 \pm 16,47$, OÖÖ bölümü ortalaması $82,79 \pm 20,62$ olarak bulundu. TSOY-32 genel puan indeksi hesaplandığında 28,18 olarak bulundu. Bölümlere göre incelendiğinde Eczacılık bölümü genel indeks puan ortalaması $30,99 \pm 8,58$, OÖÖ bölümü genel indeks puan ortalaması $26,45 \pm 10,73$ hesaplandı. Eczacılık Fakültesinin

genel indeks puan ortalaması, OÖÖ bölümü genel indeks puan ortalamasından anlamlı olarak yüksek bulundu ($p=0,01$). Araştırma grubunun eğitim öncesi ve sonrası TSOY-32 ve SOY-SEN ölçek puanları değerlendirildi. Araştırma grubunun eğitim öncesi ve sonra TSOY-32 genel indeks puanlarının bölümlere göre değerlendirilmesi tablo 2'de verildi. Buna göre; bölümlere göre son test TSOY-32 genel toplam indeks puanları, eğitim öncesi puanlara göre anlamlı olarak daha yüksek bulundu ($p < 0,001$).

Araştırma grubunun eğitim öncesi ve sonra TSOY-32 alt sınıflarının bölümlere göre değerlendirilmesi tablo 3'te verildi. Buna göre; bölümlerin TSOY-32 alt sınıflarının eğitim sonrası puanları, eğitim öncesi puanları ile karşılaştırıldığında anlamlı olarak daha yüksek saptandı ($p < 0,001$).

Araştırma grubunun SOY-SEN ölçeği toplam puanlarının bölümlere göre değerlendirilmesi tablo 4'te verildi. Buna göre; bölümlere göre eğitim sonrası SOY-SEN ölçek puanları, eğitim öncesi ölçek puanlarına göre anlamlı olarak daha yüksektir ($p < 0,001$).

TSOY-32 ölçeği genel indeks ön test-son test puan farkları ile bölümler karşılaştırıldığında eczacılık bölümü fark ortalaması $4,95 \pm 0,77$, OÖÖ bölümünün fark ortalaması $7,71 \pm 0,061$ olarak bulundu. OÖÖ bölümü öğrencilerinin TSOY-32 ölçeği genel indeks ön test- son test puan farkları eczacılık bölümü öğrencilerine göre anlamlı olarak daha yüksekti ($p=0,016$). TSOY-32 genel indeks puan farkı ile eğitim fakültesi öğrencilerinin anne eğitim durumları arasında anlamlı fark saptandı ($p=0,042$). Bu farkın lise mezunu ve okuryazar anneler tarafından oluşturulduğu belirlendi ($p=0,001$). Diğer tanımlayıcı değişkenler ile TSOY-32 ölçeği genel indeks ön test-son test toplam puan farkları arasında fark saptanmadı ($p > 0,05$).

SOY-SEN ölçeği ön test- son test toplam puan farkları ile bölümler karşılaştırıldığında eczacılık bölümü fark ortalaması $20,33 \pm 2,65$, OÖÖ bölümünün fark ortalaması ise $28,28 \pm 1,88$ olarak bulundu. OÖÖ bölümü öğrencilerinin

Tablo 1. Araştırma grubunun tanımlayıcı özelliklerinin bölümlere ve sınıflara göre dağılımı

	Eczacılık Bölümü		Okul Öncesi Öğretmenliği Bölümü		Toplam
	1.Sınıf	5.Sınıf	1.Sınıf	4. Sınıf	
	n (%)*	n (%)*	n (%)*	n (%)*	
Cinsiyet					
Kız	29 (63,0)	17 (58,6)	38 (61,3)	30 (50,0)	114 (57,9)
Erkek	17 (37,0)	12 (41,4)	24 (38,7)	30 (50,0)	83 (42,1)
Medeni Durum					
Evli	1 (2,2)	2 (6,9)	1 (1,6)	1 (1,7)	5 (2,5)
Bekar	45 (97,8)	27 (93,1)	61 (98,4)	59 (98,3)	192 (97,5)
Sosyal Güvence					
Yok	4 (8,7)	3 (10,3)	16 (25,8)	17 (28,3)	40 (20,3)
SGK	36 (78,3)	21 (72,4)	36 (58,1)	33 (55,0)	126 (64,0)
Yeşil Kart	6 (13)	4 (13,8)	9 (14,5)	9 (15,0)	28 (14,2)
Diğer	0	1 (3,4)	1 (1,6)	1 (1,7)	3 (1,5)
Yaşadığı Yer					
Aile yanı	12 (26,1)	8 (27,6)	28 (45,2)	22 (36,7)	70 (35,5)
Devlet yurdu	28 (60,9)	8 (27,6)	27 (43,5)	15 (25,0)	78 (39,6)
Özel yurt	4 (8,7)	1 (3,4)	4 (6,5)	3 (5,0)	12 (6,1)
Öğrenci evi	2 (4,3)	12 (41,4)	3 (4,3)	20 (33,3)	37 (18,8)
En Uzun Yaşadığı Yer					
Kır	5 (10,9)	6 (20,7)	13 (21,0)	14 (23,3)	38 (19,3)
Kent	41 (89,1)	23 (79,3)	49 (79,0)	46 (76,7)	159 (80,7)
Baba Eğitimi					
Okur-yazar değil	2 (4,3)	2 (6,9)	6 (9,7)	5 (8,3)	15 (7,6)
Okur-yazar	1 (2,2)	1 (3,4)	3 (4,8)	6 (10,0)	11 (5,6)
İlkokul	11 (23,9)	4 (13,8)	17 (27,4)	15 (25,0)	47 (23,9)
Ortaokul	5 (10,9)	7 (24,1)	11 (17,7)	9 (15,0)	32 (16,2)
Lise	12 (26,1)	3 (10,3)	15 (24,2)	21 (35,0)	51 (25,9)
Üniversite	15 (32,6)	12 (41,4)	10 (6,1)	4 (6,7)	41 (20,8)
Anne Eğitimi					
Okur-yazar değil	10 (21,7)	10 (34,5)	20 (32,3)	29 (48,3)	69 (35)
Okur-yazar	6 (13,0)	2 (6,9)	11 (17,7)	9 (15,0)	28 (14,2)
İlkokul	9 (19,6)	8 (27,6)	14 (22,6)	15 (25,0)	46 (23,4)
Ortaokul	7 (15,2)	3 (10,3)	5 (8,1)	4 (6,7)	19 (9,6)
Lise	8 (17,4)	1 (3,4)	10 (16,1)	2 (3,3)	21 (10,7)
Üniversite	6 (13,0)	5 (17,2)	2 (3,2)	1 (1,7)	14 (7,1)
Aile tipi					
Çekirdek	37 (80,4)	19 (65,5)	47 (75,8)	52 (86,7)	155 (78,7)
Geniş	7 (15,2)	8 (27,6)	13 (21,0)	7 (11,7)	35 (17,7)
Parçalanmış aile	2 (4,3)	2 (6,9)	2 (3,2)	1 (1,7)	7 (3,6)
Toplam	46 (100)	29(100)	62(100)	60(100)	197(100)

Sütun yüzdesi verildi.

Tablo 2. Araştırma grubunun eğitim öncesi ve sonra TSOY-32 genel indeks puanlarının bölümlere göre değerlendirilmesi

Genel Puan	Eczacılık Bölümü			OÖÖ Bölümü		
	Ortalama±SD	1.Ç-Ortanca-3.Ç		Ortalama±SD	1.Ç-Ortanca-3.Ç	
Ön test	30,99±8,58	24,48-30,21-36,46	Z*=-5,168	26,45±10,73	19,53-27,60-33,07	Z*=-8,884
Son test	35,71±8,05	31,11-35,93-42,18	p<0,001	34,24±8,19	28,90-34,89-39,06	p<0,001

1.Ç: 1. Çeyreklik
3.Ç: 3. Çeyreklik
*Wilcoxon testi kullanıldı.

Tablo 3. Araştırma grubunun eğitim öncesi ve sonra TSOY-32 alt sınıflarının bölümlere göre değerlendirilmesi

	Eczacılık Bölümü					OÖÖ Bölümü				
	Ön test		Son test			Ön test		Son test		
	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%	
Yetersiz SOY	21	28,0	6	8,1	p<0,001	44	37,0	13	10,7	p<0,001
Sorunlu/sınırlı SOY	25	33,3	25	33,8		45	37,8	39	32,2	
Yeterli SOY	21	28,0	23	31,1		22	18,5	50	41,3	
Mükemmel SOY	8	10,7	20	27,0		8	6,7	19	15,7	

* Marjinal Homojenlik Testi kullanıldı.

Tablo 4. Araştırma grubunun eğitim öncesi ve sonra SOY-SEN toplam puanlarının bölümlere göre değerlendirilmesi

Genel Puan	Eczacılık Bölümü				OÖÖ Bölümü			
	Ortalama±SD	1.Ç-Ortanca-3.Ç			Ortalama±SD	1.Ç-Ortanca-3.Ç		
Ön test	55,16±25,21	44-55-71	Z*=-6,106	41,41±23,88	30,50-43,50-56,25	Z*=-8,884		
Son test	75,39±22,90	80,0-63,75-93	p<0,001	69,38±20,03	53,50-70-83	p<0,001		

*Wilcoxon testi kullanıldı.

Tablo 5. Araştırma Grubunun Sağlık Algısı Ölçek Puanlarının Bölümlere Göre Değerlendirilmesi

	Eczacılık Bölümü		OÖÖ Bölümü	
	Ortalama ±ss	Ortanca (Min-Max)	Ortalama ±ss	Ortanca (Min-Max)
Toplam Puan	55,22±7,28	56 (39-72)	55,09±6,73	55,5 (39-71)
Kontrol Merkezi	18,06±4,20	19 (9-25)	18,81±3,89	19 (8-25)
Kesinlik	12,44±3,17	12 (4-20)	11,55±2,76	11,5 (5-20)
Sağlığın önemi	11,42±2,23	12 (3-15)	10,81±2,34	11 (4-15)
Öz farkındalık	10,80±2,44	11 (3-15)	11,25±2,08	11 (5-15)

Tablo 6. Araştırma grubunun TSOY-32 genel indeks puanları ile SOY-SEN toplam puanı, SOY-SEN bilgi puanı ve sağlık algısı toplam puanı ile korelasyonları

TSOY-32 genel indeks puanı	Eczacılık Bölümü		OÖÖ Bölümü	
	Ortalama ±ss	Ortanca (Min-Max)	Ortalama ±ss	Ortanca (Min-Max)
	rho	p	rho	p
SOY-Sen Toplam	0,294	0,010	0,459	<0,001
SOY-SEN bilgi	0,232	0,045	0,334	<0,001
Sağlık algısı	0,216	0,063	0,547	<0,001

SOY-SEN ölçeđi ön test-son test toplam puan farkları eczacılık bölümü öğrencilerine göre anlamlı olarak daha yüksekti ($p=0,013$). SOY-SEN ölçeđi ön test-son test toplam puan farkı ile tanımlayıcı deđişkenler bölümlere göre karşılaştırıldığında; eczacılık bölümü kız ve erkek öğrencilerinin puan farkı ortalamaları sırasıyla $20,66\pm 3,45$ ve $19,82\pm 4,22$ iken, OÖÖ bölümü kız ve erkek öğrencilerinin puan farkı ortalamaları sırasıyla $24,61\pm 2,07$ ve $32,53\pm 3,1$ 'dir. OÖÖ bölümünde erkek öğrencilerinin SOY-SEN toplam puan farkları anlamlı olarak kız öğrencilerden yüksekti ($p=0,038$). SOY-SEN ölçeđi ön test-son test toplam puan farkları eczacılık bölümü birinci sınıf öğrencilerinde $26,53\pm 3,26$, beşinci sınıf öğrencilerinde $10,72\pm 3,94$ iken, OÖÖ bölümü birinci sınıf öğrencilerinde $33,08\pm 2,54$, dördüncü sınıf öğrencilerinde $23,13\pm 2,51$ olarak bulundu. Eczacılık ve OÖÖ bölümünde birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin SOY-SEN ölçeđi ön test-son test toplam puan farkları son sınıf öğrencilerine göre anlamlı olarak daha yüksek saptandı (sırasıyla $p=0,003$, $p=0,006$). SOY-SEN ölçeđi toplam puan farkı ile eğitim fakültesi öğrencilerinin anne eğitim durumları arasında anlamlı fark saptandı ($p=0,026$). Bu farkın ortaokul mezunu ve okuryazar anneler tarafından oluşturulduđu belirlendi ($p=0,017$). Diđer tanımlayıcı deđişkenler SOY-SEN bilgi boyutu ölçeđi genel indeks ön test-son test toplam puan farkları arasında fark saptanmadı ($p>0,05$).

Araştırma grubunun sağlık algısı toplam ölçek puanı ortalaması $55,14\pm 6,93$ 'tür. Alt faktörler deđerlendirildiğinde "kontrol merkezi" ortancası 19,00 (min:8-max:25), "kesinlik" ortancası 12,00 (min:4-max:20), "sađlığın önemi" ortancası 11,00 (min:3-max:15), "öz farkındalık" ortancası 11,00 (min:3-max:15) olarak bulundu. Sağlık algısı ölçek puanları ve alt faktör puanlarının bölümlere göre dağılımı Tablo 5'te verildi. Buna göre; Eczacılık bölümü ve OÖÖ bölümünün sağlık algısı toplam ölçek puanları ve alt faktör puanları benzer olarak bulundu. "Kesinlik" alt faktör ölçek puanları eczacılık fakültesinde OÖÖ bölümüne göre anlamlı olarak daha yüksekti ($p=0,041$). Sağlık algısı ölçeđi toplam puanı ile tanımlayıcı deđişkenler arasında anlamlı

fark saptanmadı ($p>0,05$).

Araştırma grubunun TSOY-32 ölçek genel indeks puanı ile korelasyonları Tablo 6'da gösterildi. Buna göre; eczacılık bölümü öğrencilerinin TSOY-32 genel indeks puanı ile SOY-SEN toplam ve SOY-SEN bilgi puanları arasında pozitif yönlü zayıf anlamlı ilişki tespit edildi (sırasıyla $p=0,010$, $p=0,045$). OÖÖ bölümü öğrencilerinin TSOY-32 genel indeks puanı ile SOY-SEN toplam, SOY-SEN bilgi puanları ve sağlık algısı toplam puanları arasında pozitif yönlü orta kuvvetli anlamlı ilişki saptandı (sırasıyla $p<0,001$, $p<0,001$, $p<0,001$).

TARTIŞMA

Çocuđun doğumundan, ilköğretime başladığı güne kadar geçirdiđi dönemi kapsamına alan ve çocukların tüm gelişimlerini, toplumun kültürel deđerleri doğrultusunda gerçekleştirmeye çalışan, duyguların gelişimini ve algılama gücünü arttırarak akıl yürütme sürecinde çocuklara yardımcı olan ve yaratıcılıđını geliştiren; çocukların milli, manevi, ahlaki, kültürel ve insani deđerlere bađlılıđını sađlayan; kendini ifade etmesine, öz denetimlerini sađlayabilmesine ve bađımsızlık kazanmasına olanak sađlayan okul öncesi öğretmenleri ve hasta sađlığını, hasta güvenliđini, etkin ve etkili ilaç kullanımını sađlayan mesleki sorumluluk çerçevesinde tedavi yönetimine aktif katılan, hasta ile arasında bilgiyi karşılıklı olarak aktaran, güvenli şekilde saklayan ve hasta bakım hizmetinin dođru ilaç tedavisi ile optimize eden, hastaya ve bireye sađlık danışmanlıđı hizmeti veren eczacıların sađlık okuryazarlıđı düzeylerinin toplum sađlığının geliştirilmesi ve sađlık bilincinin arttırılması üzerindeki etkisi yadsınamaz derecede yüksek olduđu bilinmektedir.^{19,20} Bu bağlamda, yaptığımız çalışmada eczacıların ve OÖÖ'lerinin eğitim sürecindeki mevcut SOY düzeyleri belirlendi ve verdiđimiz temel SOY eğitimi sonrası, SOY düzeylerinde oluşan fark araştırıldı.

Tanıriöver ve ark.'nın yaptıđı ve Avrupa Sađlık Okuryazarlıđı (HLS-EU) Ölçeđinin temel alındığı Türkiye Sađlık Okuryazarlıđı araştırmasında, Türkiye toplumunun genel

sağlık okuryazarlığı indeksi 30,4 olarak, Van ilinin genel indeks puanının ise 22,0 olarak tespit edildiği bildirilmektedir.²¹ Avrupa Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Ölçeği ile sekiz Avrupa ülkesinde yapılan çalışmada, genel indeks puanları incelendiğinde Avusturya'nın 31,95, Bulgaristan'ın 30,50, Almanya'nın 34,49, Yunanistan'ın 33,57, İrlanda'nın 35,16, Hollanda'nın 37,06, Polonya'nın 34,45 ve son olarak da İspanya'nın 32,88 puan aldığı ve bu sekiz ülkenin genel indeks puan ortalamasının da 33,78 olduğu ifade edilmiştir.²² Kaya ve Uludağ'ın sağlık ve medya okuryazarlığı arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırdıkları çalışmada, Mersin ili Mut ilçesinde Avrupa Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Ölçeği genel indeks puanının 35,99 olduğu bildirilmektedir.²³ Okyay ve ark.'nın yaptığı Avrupa Sağlık Okuryazarlığı Ölçeği Türkçe uyarlaması çalışmasında genel indeks puanı 32,8 olarak hesaplanmış ve yine Okyay ve ark.'nın geçerlilik ve güvenilirlik çalışmasını yaptığı TSOY-32 Ölçeği genel indeks puanı da 29,5 olduğu tespit edilmiştir.¹⁶ Ergün, Balıkesir Üniversitesi Sağlık Meslek Yüksek Okulu öğrencilerinde yaptığı çalışmada, TSOY-32 genel indeks puanının 26,48 olduğunu bildirmektedir.²⁴ Yaptığımız çalışmada TSOY-32 genel indeks puanı 28,18 olarak bulundu. Ayrıca, Eczacılık bölümü genel indeks puan ortalaması, OÖÖ bölümü genel indeks puan ortalamasından da anlamlı olarak yüksek bulundu. Çalışma sonucu hesapladığımız puan ülkemizde ve Avrupa ülkelerinde yapılan çalışmaların sonuçlarına göre daha düşüktü, Türkiye SOY çalışması Van il genel indeks puanına göre daha yüksektir. Bu sonucun Avrupa ülkelerinde yapılan çalışmaların sonuçlarına göre daha düşük olarak tespit edilmesinde, Van ilinin ülkemizin sosyoekonomik ve gelişmişlik düzeyi olarak daha alt seviyede olan bir bölgesinde yer alması düşünülebilir. Bununla birlikte, çalışma örnekleminin, ülkemiz ortalama eğitim seviyesinin üstünde olan bir grup olan üniversite öğrencilerinden oluştuğu düşünüldüğünde ise genel indeks puanının Türkiye SOY çalışmasında tespit edilen Van il puanından yüksek olmasını açıklamaktadır. Ayrıca genel indeks puanlarının bölüm bazında değerlendirilmesi sonucunda, sağlıkla daha yakından ilgili olan Eczacılık bölümü öğrencilerinin puanlarının da daha yüksek olması beklenen bir sonuç

olabileceği düşünülmektedir.

Çimen ve ark. altmış beş yaş üstü kronik hastalığı olan bireylerde yaptıkları çalışmada bireylerin sağlık algısı arttıkça SOY düzeylerinin arttığını belirlemişlerdir.²⁷ Filiz SOY'un gebelik ve sağlık algısı üzerine etkisini araştırdığı tez çalışmasında sağlık algısı ile sağlık okuryazarlığı arasında pozitif yönde korelasyon saptamıştır.¹⁵ Furuya ve ark. da bireylerin, algılanan sağlık ve sağlık okuryazarlığı arasında güçlü bir ilişki bulmuştur.²⁸ Buna karşın, Dinçer ve ark. üniversite öğrencilerinde yaptıkları çalışmada ise SOY düzeyleri ile sağlık algısı arasında anlamlı bir fark saptamamışlardır.²⁹ Çalışmamızda katılımcıların sağlık algısı toplam ölçek puanı ortalaması 55,14 olarak bulundu. Sağlık algısı ile SOY alt sınıfları arasında anlamlı fark tespit edildi. Bu farkın da yetersiz SOY düzeyine sahip bireylerin oluşturduğu saptandı. SOY, algılanan sağlık durumu ile ilişkili olduğu için yeterli SOY düzeylerine sahip bireyler, aktif olarak kendi sağlıklarıyla ilgili bilgi edinebilir ve sağlıklarının kötüye gittiğini fark ettiklerinde sağlık problemlerini çözmek için harekete geçebilir.

Şimşek'in sağlık davranışı teorileri temel alınarak gerçekleştirildiği gençlere yönelik akran eğitimi araştırmalarında bilgi puanlarının yaklaşık 2 kat arttığı, uygulama puanlarının anlamlı ölçüde yükseldiği bulunmuştur.³⁰ Çalışmamızda TSOY-32 alt sınıflarının, SOY-SEN ölçeği toplam puan ve alt boyut puanlarının eczacılık bölümü ve OÖÖ bölümü öğrencilerinde eğitim sonrası puanları, eğitim öncesi puanları ile karşılaştırıldığında anlamlı olarak daha yüksek saptandı. Bu durum bize verdiğimiz sağlık okuryazarlığı eğitiminin SOY düzeylerinde etkili olduğunu göstermektedir.

Sonuç olarak bu çalışmada Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Eczacılık ve OÖÖ Bölümünde SOY düzeyleri belirlendi, verilen sağlık eğitimi sonrası SOY düzeylerindeki değişim incelendi ve sağlık algısının SOY düzeyleri üzerindeki etkisi saptandı. Buna göre; Sağlık eğitimi sonrası Eczacılık bölümü ve OÖÖ bölümü öğrencilerinin yetersiz ve sorun-

lu-sınırlı SOY düzeyleri azalırken, yeterli ve mükemmel SOY düzeyleri artış gösterdi. Bununla beraber çalışmada sağlık algısı düzeyleri ile SOY düzeyleri arasında pozitif yönlü bir ilişki saptandı.

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Yazarlar çıkar çatışması bildirmemişlerdir.

Yazar Katkıları

Fikir – STÇ, SÇD; Denetleme-SÇD; Veri toplanması ve/veya işlemesi-STÇ; Analiz ve/veya yorum –STÇ, SÇD; Yazıyı yazan – STÇ.

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The Effect of Occupational Health and Safety Education on Hazelnut Agriculture Workers' Knowledge Levels Related to Physical and Ergonomic Hazards

Fındık Tarımı Çalışanlarında İş Sağlığı ve Güvenliği Eğitiminin Fiziksel ve Ergonomik Tehlikelerle İlgili Bilgi Düzeylerine Etkisi

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Abstract

Introduction	The study aimed at identifying dangers and risks encountered by hazelnut farm workers and exploring the effect of occupational health and safety training about hazelnut farming upon the workers' knowledge level.
Materials and Methods	In this research, which was conducted as an intervention study, the pre-test post-test single-group research pattern was used. Training and brochures were given to 60 hazelnut agriculture employees selected using a random sampling method after the pretest. The change in the current knowledge score was examined statistically with the last test application two weeks later.
Results	53.3% of the participants were male and their average age was 43.0±14.4 years. 60.0% of the participants stated that they had accidents while they were engaged in hazelnut farming and 71.7% of them did not have any training about occupational health and safety previously. Participants' score of knowledge about physical dangers and risks as to occupational health and safety was 62.7±17.8 before the training while it significantly increased to 79.3±16.3 after the training. It was seen that after the training held; having a previous training, having high educational status, having no accidents previously and being at a young age affected post-test scores significantly.
Conclusion	In the study, it was explored that hazelnut farming workers in Trabzon Province lacked knowledge about physical and ergonomic risks in relation to occupational health and safety. For the trainings of the workers; universities, provincial and district directorates of agriculture and agriculture cooperatives can be used.
Keywords	Workers Health; Farmers; Ergonomics; Hazelnut; Agriculture

Öz

Amaç	Bu araştırma; fındık tarımı çalışanlarının karşılaştıkları tehlike ve riskleri belirlemeyi ayrıca fındık tarımına yönelik iş sağlığı ve güvenliği eğitiminin fındık tarımı çalışanlarının bilgi düzeylerine etkisini belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Müdahale çalışması olarak yürütülen bu çalışmada ön test son test tek gruplu araştırma deseni kullanılmıştır. Rastgele örneklem yöntemi kullanarak seçilen 60 fındık tarımı çalışanına ön test sonrası eğitim ve broşür verilmiştir. İki hafta sonra yapılan son test uygulaması ile mevcut bilgi puanındaki değişim istatistiksel olarak incelenmiştir.
Bulgular	Katılımcıların %53,3'ü erkek olup yaş ortalamaları 43,0±14,4 yıldır. Katılımcıların %60,0'i fındık tarımıyla uğraşırken kaza geçirdiğini, %71,7'si daha önce iş sağlığı ve güvenliği ile ilgili herhangi bir eğitim almadığını belirtmiştir. Katılımcıların iş sağlığı ve güvenliğinde fiziksel tehlike ve riskler hakkında bilgi puanı düzeyleri eğitim öncesi 62,7±17,8 iken eğitim sonrası 79,3±16,3 olarak anlamlı derecede artış göstermiştir. Eğitim sonrası son test puanına daha önce eğitim almış olmanın, yüksek eğitim düzeyinin, daha önce kaza geçirmemiş olmanın ve genç yaşta olmanın anlamlı olarak olumlu yönde etki ettiği belirlenmiştir.
Sonuç	Bu çalışmada Trabzon'da fındık tarımı çalışanlarının iş sağlığı ve güvenliği hakkında fiziksel ve ergonomik riskler konusunda bilgi eksiklikleri olduğu görülmüştür. Çalışanların eğitimleri için üniversiteler, tarım il ve ilçe müdürlükleri ve tarım kooperatifleri kullanılabilir.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Çalışan Sağlığı; Çiftçiler; Ergonomi; Fındık; Tarım



GİRİŞ

Agricultural sector is always faced with dangerous processes and situations due to the challenges in working conditions. The reasons may be associated with such factors as unexpectedly changing climate, field and soil conditions, intense farming activities, presence of working conditions requiring physical strength and unorganized working situations in the field. Due to these different difficulties; farming always involves serious risks that may lead to severe problems.¹

Most of the mortalities and injuries occurring in the developing countries are seen in professions that cover dangerous activities like agriculture, construction, fishing and mining in which majority of the population is employed.² According to the estimates of the studies done by International Labour Organization (ILO); 170 thousand workers are killed each year in agricultural sector that employ 1.3 billion people, 340 million workers are involved in dangerous occupational accidents and many workers suffer from occupational diseases.³ The statistical office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) announced that farming workers are the second most risky group in terms of occupational accidents following construction workers.⁴ According to the labour code numbered 6331; work places are classified as less dangerous, dangerous and highly dangerous work places. In this sense; agricultural workers are generally placed in dangerous and highly dangerous labour groups.⁵ Hazelnut farming is categorized to be an agricultural sector that belongs to perennial plant production under the title of dangerous farming activities. When agricultural sector in Türkiye is examined, it is seen that Turkish agriculture is generally realized as small family businesses that employ family members for free who provide work force.⁵ As enforced by the Occupational Health and Safety Code numbered 6331; occupational health and safety procedures have become compulsory for all sectors regardless of the numbers of the workers employed. However; those whose professional tasks are not defined very precisely, those who are self-employed and those who earn money

by producing services and goods for their own economies are exempt from the enforcement of this code.⁶ Therefore; family businesses, engaged in agricultural sector in Türkiye and generally composed of those working on their own account, are exempt from the Occupational Health and Safety Code.⁷

The studies done indicated that agricultural employees lack training and education and have very low level of knowledge as well as work or are forced to work under inadequate conditions in terms of health and safety. As emphasized above, hazelnut farming –classified under the title of dangerous farming activities- should be studied in terms of occupational health and safety because it is an agricultural activity that poses risks for employees.⁸

In our country, hazelnut agriculture is very important. The fact that Türkiye carries out majority of the global hazelnut production and dominates the hazelnut exportation makes studies on hazelnut farming and hazelnut workers important.⁴ Our country provides 67-75% of global hazelnut production annually from hazelnut farming fields in Black Sea Region. Besides; hazelnut is the agricultural product that is one of the major sources of foreign currency inflow in Türkiye. According to the research results declared by Türkiye Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock; hazelnut is an agricultural product in which nearly 400 thousand families are employed over 700 thousand acres of land.⁹ Hazelnut farming workers are also subject to physical, chemical, biological, ergonomic and psycho-social risk factors as in other businesses.¹⁰ Considering dangers and risks encountered by hazelnut workers; unanticipated and undesired situations -such as potential accidents that may occur while working in the fields- may negatively affect human life, human health, professional and work life. From this point of view; including hazelnut agriculture employees into occupational health and safety activities is a requirement; which is considered as a public health necessity.⁹

As in all agricultural productions, hazelnut agriculture bears more dangers and risks than thought.¹⁰ Similar to other agricultural sectors; there are numerous physical, chemical, biological, ergonomic and psycho-social risks and hazards in hazelnut production. However; literature review concluded that workers of hazelnut farming are subject to physical and ergonomic risks and hazards more.¹⁰ Therefore; variables we would like to underline in the study have been determined as physical and ergonomic factors.

One of the most important factors in occupational accidents is physical factor. Physical factors that are important in hazelnut farming are listed as heat, humidity, illumination, noise, vibration and dust. Various studies underlined how these physical factors cause and affect agricultural accidents. The results of these studies found that bad work conditions affect agricultural accidents directly and psychological status of agricultural employees indirectly.¹

Another important factor in hazelnut farming is ergonomic factors. Ergonomics lexically is the study of occupations but when examined in depth, it is the science concerned with working conditions, working environment and full interaction with the mechanics of workers.¹¹ The International Ergonomics Association defines ergonomics as, “the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data, and methods to design in order to optimize human well-being and overall system performance”.¹² According to another definition; ergonomics is the science of personal working. Additionally; ergonomics basically intends those jobs should be adapted to employees and employees to jobs and provides all the necessary conditions for all workers to work effectively by considering their qualities and abilities.¹¹

The study aimed at exploring hazards and risks encountered by hazelnut farm workers and finding the effect of

occupational health and safety training about hazelnut farming upon the workers' knowledge level.

MATERIAL and METHODS

The current study was done as an interventional study between March and May 2019 in Arsin County of Trabzon Province. The study, in which participation was voluntary, was done with hazelnut farm workers who accepted to join the study and gave written consents. Inclusion criteria were specified as follows: being older than 18, being engaged in hazelnut farming within the last one year and being available so that survey forms could be distributed twice during the study period. The difference between the post-test score to be obtained after the training held and the pre-test score was determined as 10% and the sample size was calculated to be at least 60 participants with a confidence level of 95% and power of 80%.¹³

In the study, interventional study design was employed using one group sample and pre-test and post-test. At the beginning, a survey form that included questions addressing physical and ergonomic hazards and risks those participants may face in hazelnut farming was administered in order to explore existing knowledge score of the participants and their actual knowledge scores were determined. A survey form of 35 questions, which was developed by the author, was administered to the participants. The first 10 questions of the survey form included participants' socio-demographic characteristics while the other 25 questions addressed possible physical and ergonomic hazards and risks that the participants may encounter in hazelnut farming. The first 13 questions of these 25 questions were designed to identify knowledge level of physical dangers and risks while the other 12 questions targeted at knowledge level of ergonomic hazards and risks.

The 25 questions that addressed knowledge level related to possible physical and ergonomic hazards and risks that the participants may encounter in hazelnut farming were developed by the author after a literature review was real-

ized. Each question is scored with 4 points and the highest score is 100. There are three different responses for each question and points range as follows: 4 (True), 0 (False) and 0 (No idea).

With the pre-test phase, planned as the first step of the study, participants' knowledge level about physical and ergonomic hazards and risks that they may encounter in hazelnut farming was found. After participants' pre-test phase was completed, "Occupational health and safety brochure for hazelnut farm workers" prepared in line with the existing physical and ergonomic hazards and risks in hazelnut farming was distributed to each participant. After the brochures were distributed, each participant received a theoretical and practical training of 40 minutes regarding occupational health and safety in hazelnut farming. Following the distribution of the brochures and the training held for the participants, survey forms were administered and the first phase of the study was completed.

The physical and ergonomic hazards and risks that the participants were generally subject to while being engaged with hazelnut farming were defined in the contents of the training provided to the participants. In addition; it was emphasized what participants can do in order to prevent hazards and risks, too. Participants were trained and informed of physical dangers such as noise, vibration and dust and lack or non-use of personal protective equipment and ergonomic hazards such as exhausting and heavy tasks, repetitive tasks, manual handling and difficult postures etc. At the end of the theoretical training, participants were asked to demonstrate some movements taught in the practical training that would reduce ergonomic risks. The questions to determine the knowledge scores about the training and brochure content used in the research and the dangers and risks in hazelnut farming were created by the researchers by scanning the literature and based on the "Occupational Health and Safety Guide for Hazelnut Farming Workers".¹⁰

In the second phase of the study; appointments were set for the same participants for two weeks later and the same survey form was again administered to the participants so that their knowledge level about physical and ergonomic hazards and risks that they may encounter in hazelnut farming could be identified. Thus, post-test score and pre-test score were compared and effectiveness of the brochure was measured.

The data were gathered after the ethical suitability of the research was approved by Ethical Council of Karadeniz Technical University, Medicine Faculty (with the decision dated 04.03.2019 and numbered 24237859-205) in accordance with voluntariness principle. The participants were thoroughly instructed in the aims and details of the study and thus "Informed Consent Principle" was achieved.

Statistical Analysis

The data obtained with the questionnaire forms were analyzed using the SPSS 23.0 statistical program. As the analysis results show; descriptive information was explained with numbers (n) and percentages (%) for between-group variables and mean and standard deviation figures for numerical data.

Compliance with parametric conditions was evaluated to determine the statistical tests to be used in the analysis of the data. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to determine whether the parameters in the study showed a normal distribution. Chi-square test was used for statistical evaluation of nominal and ordinal data, and t test and ANOVA test were used for numerical data evaluation. The Mcnemar test was used for the pre- and post-training analysis of each of the occupational health and safety questionnaire questions, and the Wilcoxon test was used for the significance analysis of the score increase before and after the training and brochure distribution. A level of statistical significance of 0.05 was used in all tests.

RESULTS

The participant 60 hazelnut farm workers lived in Arsin County of Trabzon Province, 53.3% of the participants were male and their average age was 43.0 ± 14.4 years while 46.7% of the participants were female and their average age was 37.2 ± 15.0 years.

The socio-demographic characteristics of the participant 60 hazelnut farming workers were shown in Table 1. 55.0% of the participants were married, 26.7% of them had university degrees and 26.7% of them were housewives. It was found that 63.3% of the participants did not smoke, 58.3% of them earned their living from hazelnut production and 71.7% of them did not receive any training about occupational health and safety previously. When the distributions of the accidents that participants had while they were engaged with hazelnut farming were studied, it was understood that 60.0% of them had accidents previously.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the participant hazelnut workers (n:60)

Socio-demographic characteristics		n	%
Gender	Male	32	53.3
	Female	28	46.7
Marital status	Married	33	55.0
	Single	27	45.0
Educational status	Literate	7	11.7
	Primary school	16	26.7
	Secondary school	8	13.3
	High school	13	21.7
	University	16	26.7
Profession	Housewives	16	26.7
	Civil servant	15	25.0
	Worker	11	18.3
	Retired	7	11.7
	Self employed	5	8.3
	Student	5	8.3
	Farmer	1	1.7
Smoking status	Yes	18	30.0
	No	38	63.3
	Quitted	4	6.7
Annual Income Type	Hazelnut farming	35	58.3
	Other	25	41.7
Status of receiving education related to occupational health and safety among hazelnut workers	Yes	17	28.3
	No	43	71.7
Status of having accidents while being engaged with hazelnut farming	Yes	36	60.0
	No	21	35.0
	Not remembering	3	5.0

The distribution of the responses given to the first 13 questions of the survey form that addressed participants' knowledge level regarding physical dangers and risks was presented in Table 2. 51.7% of the participants thought in the pre-test that it was correct not to drink fizzy drinks while they were working whereas the ratio went up to 88.3% in the re-test done after training. 91.7% of the participants thought that it was correct to eat by sitting on the ground during the meal breaks before the training. However, this ratio was found to go down to 58.3% after the training ($p<0.001$). Average water consumption should not exceed 6 glasses of water while working. In this sense; it was noted that 68.3% of the participants gave wrong responses to this question in the pre-test. However; this ratio went down to 30% after the training ($p<0.001$).

After the training, the ratio of those who answered correctly to the question that dust mask should be worn before entering dusty environments rose to 83.3% from 56.7% ($p<0.001$), the ratio of those who gave correct answers to the question that protective ear muffs should not be taken off while working rose to 50.0% from 25.0% ($p=0.003$) and the ratio of those who answered correctly to the question that hydration need of body can be determined with urine colour rose to 83.3% from 71.7% ($p=0.039$). Before the training, the rate of those who thought that it was correct that farming activities should be performed by having wind behind was 48.3% whereas it became 83.3% after the training ($p<0.001$). Before the training, 75% of the participants thought that pouring fertilizer in a position close to the ground was incorrect. After the training, the post-test showed that this ratio went down to 51.7% ($p=0.004$). The ratio of those who answered correctly to the question that agricultural machinery should not be used with oil-greased hands rose to 93.3% from 81.7% ($p=0.039$), the ratio of those who answered correctly to the question that bullae caused by sunburn should not be excised rose to 83.3% from 68.3% ($p=0.012$).

Table 3 demonstrated the distribution of the responses giv-

en to the questions of the survey form that addressed participants' knowledge level regarding ergonomic hazards and risks. The ratio of those hazelnut farm workers who answered correctly to the question that sawing-machine should not be used in order to prune tall branches of hazelnut tree while being engaged with hazelnut farming was 61.7% in the pre-test whereas the same ratio was found to be 81.7% in post-test after the training and brochure ($p=0.002$).

The ratio of those hazelnut farm workers who answered correctly to the question that load amount should be reduced whereas number of laps should be increased while carrying loads and being engaged with hazelnut farming was 53.3% in pre-test whereas it became 90.0% in post-test after the training and brochure ($p<0.001$). Meanwhile, the ratio of the participants who answered wrongly to the question that load amount should be lower than 20 kg. for the adults was 61.7% in the pre-test. However; in the post-test performed after the training and brochure this ratio reduced to 23.3% ($p<0.001$). Besides, in the pre-test 78.3% of the participants answered correctly to the question that vehicles should be loaded in a way not to block driver's angle while this ratio was found to go up to 93.3 in the post-test ($p=0.022$). On the other hand; 56.7% of the participants answered wrongly to the question that loads should not be lifted directly from the ground in the pre-test while in the post-test 31.7% of the participants answered wrongly to the same question after the training and brochure ($p<0.001$). The ratio of the participants who answered correctly to the question that nobody should be around while pruning trees was 83.3% in the pre-test while the same ratio became 68.3% after the training and brochure in the post-test ($p=0.035$).

The comparisons of the distribution of knowledge scores that were obtained before and after the training about physical and ergonomic hazards and risks in the hazelnut farming and hazelnut farm workers' socio-demographic characteristics was shown in Table 4. In the results, it was

Table 2. The distribution of the responses given to the questions that addressed physical dangers and risks

Questions that addressed physical dangers		Pre test		Post test		p
Fizzy and caffeinated drinks should not be drunk while working	Correct	31	51.7	53	88.3	<0.001
	Wrong	29	48.3	7	11.7	
Meals should be consumed by sitting on the ground during meal breaks	Correct	5	8.3	25	41.7	<0.001
	Wrong	55	91.7	35	58.3	
Water consumption should exceed 6 glasses per hour while working	Correct	19	31.7	42	70.0	<0.001
	Wrong	41	68.3	18	30.0	
Clothes should be changed as soon as possible when wet and sweaty	Correct	49	81.7	53	88.3	0.289
	Wrong	11	18.3	7	11.7	
Dust mask should be worn after entering dusty environments	Correct	34	56.7	50	83.3	<0.001
	Wrong	26	43.3	10	16.7	
Protective ear muffs should be taken off at certain intervals	Correct	15	25.0	30	50.0	0.003
	Wrong	45	75.0	30	50.0	
Dark colour of urine indicates hydration need	Correct	43	71.7	50	83.3	0.039
	Wrong	17	28.3	10	16.7	
First aid kit should be available for emergent situations	Correct	53	88.3	58	96.7	0.125
	Wrong	7	11.7	2	3.3	
Clothes that cover the body fully should be preferred	Correct	52	86.7	55	91.7	0.250
	Wrong	8	13.3	5	8.3	
Farming activities should be performed by having wind behind	Correct	29	48.3	50	83.3	<0.001
	Wrong	31	51.7	10	16.7	
Fertilizer should be poured in a position close to the ground	Correct	15	25.0	29	48.3	0.004
	Wrong	45	75.0	31	51.7	
Agricultural machinery should not be used with oil-greased hands	Correct	49	81.7	56	93.3	0.039
	Wrong	11	18.3	4	6.7	
Bullae caused by sunburn should be excised	Correct	41	68.3	50	83.3	0.012
	Wrong	19	31.7	10	16.7	

determined that the education and brochure initiative provided a statistically significant increase in all sociodemographic characteristics of hazelnut agricultural workers ($p < 0.001$).

Table 3. The distributions and comparisons of the responses given by participants to the questions that addressed ergonomic hazards and risks (n:60)

Questions that addressed physical dangers		Pre test		Post test		p
Sawing-machine should be used in order to prune tall branches	Correct	37	61.7	49	81.7	0.002
	Wrong	23	38.3	11	18.3	
Load amount should be increased while number of laps should be decreased	Correct	32	53.3	54	90.0	<0.001
	Wrong	28	46.7	6	10.0	
Load amount should be bigger than 20 kg. for the adults	Correct	23	38.3	46	76.7	<0.001
	Wrong	37	61.7	14	23.3	
Vehicles should be loaded in a way not to block driver's angle	Correct	47	78.3	56	93.3	0.022
	Wrong	13	21.7	4	6.7	
Farming sacks of 80 kg should be preferred to those of 50 kg	Correct	44	73.3	49	81.7	0.227
	Wrong	16	26.7	11	18.3	
Heavy loads should be lifted directly from the ground	Correct	26	43.3	41	68.3	<0.001
	Wrong	34	56.7	19	31.7	
Manual vehicles and motor vehicles should not be used for carrying heavy loads	Correct	52	86.7	50	83.3	0.754
	Wrong	8	13.3	10	16.7	
Those carrying loads should be changed	Correct	51	85.0	51	85.0	1.000
	Wrong	9	15.0	9	15.0	
Loads should be lifted on tiptoe	Correct	39	65.0	47	78.3	0.057
	Wrong	21	35.0	13	21.7	
People should stay around while pruning trees	Correct	50	83.3	41	68.3	0.035
	Wrong	10	16.7	19	31.7	
Accidents should not be reported to anybody	Correct	56	93.3	56	93.3	1.000
	Wrong	4	6.7	4	6.7	
Loads should not be lifted with hasty movements and uncontrolled strength	Correct	49	81.7	51	85.0	0.687
	Wrong	11	18.3	9	15.0	

Table 4. The comparisons of the distribution of knowledge scores related to socio-demographic characteristics before and after the training

Socio-demographic characteristics		Before the training	After the training	p
		Mean±SD	Mean±SD	
Age	<30	68.4±10.2	86.7±7.1	<0.001
	30-40	69.8±14.7	83.3±17.8	0.005
	>40	56.5±20.6	73.2±17.9	<0.001
Gender	Male	67.0±14.6	81.2±15.4	<0.001
	Female	57.8±20.0	77.1±17.3	<0.001
Marital status	Married	62.7±15.0	78.4±15.0	<0.001
	Single	62.6±21.0	80.4±18.1	<0.001
Educational status	Primary school	54.6±21.9	73.3±18.6	<0.001
	Secondary school	61.9±11.7	77.5±14.8	<0.001
	University	75.5±8.9	90.2±7.9	0.001
Profession	Civil servant	75.7±10.5	89.0±8.8	0.001
	Self employed	64.4±13.8	80.0±15.2	<0.001
	Housewives	47.5±19.2	69.0±18.3	<0.001
Annual income type	Hazelnut farming	59.6±19.5	76.2±17.1	<0.001
	Other	67.0±14.4	83.6±14.5	<0.001
Having a previous training	Yes	69.4±10.7	87.2±9.0	<0.001
	No	60.0±19.4	76.2±17.5	<0.001
Status of having accidents in hazelnut farming	Yes	56.5±18.4	75.5±16.5	<0.001
	No	72.0±12.1	85.0±14.6	<0.001

DISCUSSION

All over the world as well as in our country, it is known that occupational health and safety procedures for agricultural workers have been improving significantly in the recent years. On the other hand; the fact that agricultural workers should be aware of the legal rights and privileges and that they are informed of occupational health and safety practices in agriculture or that they follow these occupational health and safety practices in agriculture is important.¹⁴ As in all occupational fields, in agriculture too, basic objective of occupational health and safety is to protect the employees.¹⁵ It is thought that trainings to be held about occupational health and safety will increase awareness among farming workers and can reduce potential accidents while working.¹⁴

The average scores of the correct answers given by the participant hazelnut farm workers to the questions about

physical dangers and risks increased in all questions. However; it was detected that a statistically significant increase was only seen in 10 of the questions. Although there was an increase in the ratio of answering correctly to the other three questions, no statistically significant difference was found.

As for the 12 questions related to the ergonomic hazards and risks; only 6 questions were correctly answered by the participant hazelnut farm workers; which was statistically significant. On the other hand, no significant change existed in the other 6 questions.

The significant statistical increase in the questions correctly answered by the participant hazelnut farm workers about physical and ergonomic hazards and risks in hazelnut farming demonstrated that the training was not successful enough in terms of behavior change. The rea-

son may have been that the duration of the training determined within the limits of the study was not long enough and participants' capacities were not advanced enough to produce a behavioral change or the participants had already demonstrated sufficient and correct behaviors.

In the study of Aybek et al (2003) that studied possible causes and prevention methods of occupational accidents, lack of sufficient trainings about occupational health and safety was identified to be the key factor for the participants to suffer from occupational accidents. In some regions of our country, it was noted that particularly agricultural workers receive inadequate and insufficient training about occupational health and safety.¹⁶ The study of Aybek et al (2003) pointed out that regular and sufficient trainings to be planned and held for agricultural workers and provision of suitable training conditions can prevent 98% of occupational accidents in farming.¹⁶ In the study of Miller et al (1998), it was concluded that knowledge level of the students who received regular occupational health and safety trainings about occupational accidents increased year by year and it was found that the results of the study done by Miller et al (1998) concurred with the results of our study that was done in order to maximize hazelnut farm workers' knowledge levels of physical and ergonomic hazards and risks. Therefore; we are of the opinion that trainings in relation to occupational health and safety in hazelnut farming should be organized regularly and consistently through certain programs.¹⁷

It is necessary that the topic of occupational health and safety among hazelnut farm workers should be introduced and taught as a life style instead of organizing them as single session training. We are of the opinion that correct and regular occupational health and safety trainings to be held for hazelnut farm workers may yield positive outcomes.¹⁸ Improving and developing workplace and working conditions of agricultural workers are an important start in terms of occupational health and safety. However; as in all occupational fields, in agriculture too, occupational acci-

dents are mostly caused by workers and lack of education is one of the most important factors; which indicates that best solution to minimize agricultural accidents is to provide trainings about occupational accidents.¹⁹

CONCLUSION

In the study that we conducted, it was concluded that with occupational health and safety trainings to be provided to farming workers in hazelnut farming, potential dangers and risk factors can be reduced and potential accidents can be minimized.

Participant hazelnut farm workers' score of knowledge level about physical and ergonomic dangers and risks was 62.7 ± 17.8 before the training while it increased to 79.3 ± 16.3 after the training; which pointed out that participants in our study had significant increases in knowledge level about physical and ergonomic hazards and risks. From these results, we may introduce the following recommendations about physical and ergonomic dangers and risks for the researchers to conduct relevant studies and authorities:

For the occupational health and safety trainings of the hazelnut farm workers; universities, provincial and district directorates of agriculture and agriculture cooperatives can be appointed. Local TV channels and social media devices can be helpful in this respect. Unregistered employment, which is a particular barrier to providing occupational health and safety services in agriculture, should be struggled. It is necessary to register agricultural employees through a specific registration system and in addition, agricultural unregistered employment should closely be inspected. Since there is no legal enforcement in occupational health and safety in hazelnut farming, workers should be taught of occupational health and safety. Therefore; occupational health and safety services can be used as a prerequisite in providing agricultural incentives and loans. Physicians and health personnel of primary care health services who have an easy access to agricultural workers

can be encouraged to visit them and to correct their malpractices in the field. The number of the relevant studies should be increased and the results and study outcomes should be disseminated.

Limitations of the Research

In the research, it was aimed to determine the dangers and risks faced by hazelnut agriculture employees and to investigate the impact of occupational health and safety trainings given related to hazelnut agriculture on the knowledge levels of employees. It is suggested that similar studies should be carried out in a wider range of samples. In addition, since there is no scale in the literature that can measure the level of knowledge about the dangers and risks faced by hazelnut farming employees, the questionnaire used in the study was created by the researchers in accordance with the literature.

Ethics Committee Approval

The data were gathered after the ethical suitability of the research was approved by Ethical Council of Karadeniz Technical University, Medicine Faculty (with the decision dated 04.03.2019 and numbered 24237859-205) in accordance with voluntariness principle. The participants were thoroughly instructed in the aims and details of the study and thus "Informed Consent Principle" was achieved.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflicts of interest.

Declaration of Contribution

Concept/Design: OT, GÇ, MT. Analysis/Interpretation: OT, GÇ. Data Acquisition: OT, GÇ. Writing: OT. Revision and Correction: OT, GÇ, MT, NEB. Final Approval: OT, GÇ, MT, NEB.

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Neuropathic Pain in Patients with Psoriatic Arthritis: A Bystander or a Gamechanger?

Psoriatik Artritli Hastalarda Nöropatik Ağrı: Seyirci mi, Oyun Değiştirici mi?

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Abstract

Introduction The relationship between clinical and laboratory parameters associated with the neuropathic pain presence in Psoriatic Arthritis is not well known and has not been adequately studied. Based on these assumptions, the aim of our study is to investigate how often neuropathic pain occurs in Psoriatic Arthritis patients and how much it is related to the clinical and laboratory parameters of the disease.

Materials and Methods In the cross-sectional study, 45 Psoriatic Arthritis patients diagnosed according to The Classification Criteria for Psoriatic Arthritis were included. In our study, Pain Detect Questionnaire (PDQ) was used to assess the neuropathic pain characteristics. Presence of enthesitis was determined by SPARCC to ensure objective measurements. Functional status was evaluated with the Health Assessment Questionnaire (HAQ). The Short Form-36 (SF-36) questionnaire was used to evaluate the quality of life.

Results A total of 45 patients were included in the study. The mean duration of symptoms was 78.91 ± 95.8 months. There are 16 patients receiving "NSAID" treatment, 28 patients receiving DMARD treatment, and 13 patients receiving biological therapy. Among the patients included in the study, 30 patients with neuropathic pain and 15 without neuropathic pain were found according to the Pain Detect questionnaire. A significant difference was observed between these two groups in the results of DAPSA, VAS movement, HAQ, morning stiffness, and SF-36 Body pain.

Conclusion Our study has shown that neuropathic pain has a high prevalence in Psoriatic Arthritis patients. This association was observed to be related to functional limitation. Additionally, the DAPSA score was found to be significantly higher in patients with neuropathic pain due to pain sensation which suggests that it may be a factor reducing treatment success. It is conceivable that the recognition and treatment of neuropathic pain may increase the success of Psoriatic Arthritis treatment.

Keywords Psoriatic Arthritis, Neuropathic Pain, DMARD, Biological Treatment, Pain, Rheumatology

Öz

Amaç Psoriatik Artritte nöropatik ağrı varlığı ile ilişkili klinik ve laboratuvar parametreleri arasındaki ilişki iyi bilinmemektedir ve yeterince çalışılmamıştır. Bu varsayımlara dayanarak çalışmamızın amacı, Psoriatik Artrit hastalığı bulunan kişilerde nöropatik ağrı dediğimiz durumu ne sıklıkta olduğunu ve hastalığın klinik ve laboratuvar parametreleri ile ne kadar ilişkili olduğunu araştırmaktır.

Yöntem ve Gereçler Kesitsel çalışmada The Classification Criteria for Psoriatic Arthritis'e göre tanı almış 45 Psöriatik Artrit hastası dahil edilmiştir. Çalışmamızda nöropatik ağrı özelliklerinin değerlendirilmesi için Pain Detect Anketi (PDQ) kullanıldı. Objektif ölçümler yapılması amacıyla SPARCC (Spondyloarthritis Research Consortium of Canada) aracılığıyla entezit varlığı belirlendi. Fonksiyonel durum, Sağlık Değerlendirme Anketi (HAQ) ile değerlendirilmiştir. Yaşam kalitesini değerlendirmek için Kısa Form-36 (SF-36) anketi kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular Çalışmaya toplam 45 hasta (32 kadın [%71,1], 13 erkek [%28,9]) alınmıştır. Ortalama semptom süresi 78,91 ± 95,8 aydır. NSAID tedavisi alan 16 hasta (%35,6), DMARD tedavisi alan 28 hasta (%62,2), Biyolojik tedavi alan 13 hasta (%28,9) bulunmaktadır. Çalışmaya alınan hastalarda Pain Detect anketine göre nöropatik ağrısı olan olan 30 hasta (%66,7), Nöropatik ağrı olmayan 15 (33,3) saptanmıştır. Bu iki grup arasında DAPSA, VAS hareket, HAQ, sabah tutukluğu ve SF-36 Vücut ağrısı sonuçlarında anlamlı farklılık saptanmıştır.

Sonuç Psoriatik Artritli hastalarda Nöropatik ağrının yüksek prevalansta bulunduğu çalışmamızla gösterilmiştir. Bu birlikteliğin fonksiyonel kısıtlılıkla ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca Ağrı hissi nedeniyle DAPSA skoru nöropatik ağrı olan hastalarda anlamlı olarak yüksek bulunmuş ve bu da tedavi başarısını düşüren bir etken olabileceğini düşündürmektedir. Nöropatik ağrının tanınması ve tedavi edilmesinin Psoriatik Artrit tedavisindeki başarıyı arttırabileceği düşünülebilir.



INTRODUCTION

Psoriatic arthritis (PsA) is a progressive, erosive, chronic, heterogeneous, and systemic inflammatory disease that develops in 30% of patients with psoriasis.¹ PsA can affect six clinical domains including peripheral arthritis, dactylitis, enthesitis, psoriasis, psoriatic nail disease, and axial disease.^{2,3} PsA can be treated with DMARDs and biologics effectively.⁴ However, although these treatments may lower inflammation in rheumatic diseases, some patients complain of decreased physical functions and quality of life due to pain.⁵ Pain is the most common symptom in chronic inflammatory diseases, the occurrence of which is due to different mechanisms.⁶ Pain in inflammatory diseases was considered as only a symptom until a few years ago, but there is now increasing evidence that chronic pain is a disease in itself.^{7,8} Patients with inflammatory arthritis (IA), such as rheumatoid arthritis (RA), ranked pain as the most important symptom. In spite of the advances in RA treatment, many patients still complain of pain. Studies have shown us that occurrence of fibromyalgia with RA, a prototype of central sensitization, is associated with poorer improvement in both pain evaluation and disease activity scores of anti-inflammatory therapy.^{9,10}

Pain is generally considered to occur due to inflammation in the synovium stimulating afferent sensory nerve C fibers in patients with RA, PsA, and spondyloarthritis (SpA), and thus it is accepted to be of nociceptive origin. On the other hand, pain hypersensitivity, an increased response of central and peripheral neurons, may continue after the cessation of inflammation due to maladaptive stimuli that lead to chronic pain.^{11,12} Pain hypersensitivity leads to overestimation of joint sensitivity, pain, and the thought that health condition is worsening. For this reason, determining the possible underlying pain mechanisms may be important to help the treatment success.¹³ In inflammatory joint diseases, accurate evaluation of pain is essential for treatment and follow-up because the main disease is a parameter evaluated in the calculation of activity indices. These are disease activity score-28 (DAS-28) for RA, anky-

losing spondylitis disease activity score (ASDAS) for ankylosing spondylitis (AS), or disease activity index (DAPSA) for psoriatic arthritis for PsA.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ As disease activity indices represent a very important variable both in daily clinical practice and in observational and clinical studies, this issue is important.¹⁷

Neuropathic pain is defined as pain caused or triggered by primary damage or dysfunction of the nervous system.¹⁸ Neuropathic pain symptoms include burning, tingling, electric shock-like pain, hyperalgesia, and allodynia.¹⁹ The relationship of the neuropathic pain with RA and Osteoarthritis (OA) has been examined in previous studies.²⁰⁻²⁴ Regarding RA, it has been shown that at least 13% of patients had neuropathic pain features, that they could be detected in the early stage of the disease, and that their presence decreased remission success in the 6-month follow-up.²¹ The prevalence of neuropathic pain in OA is estimated to be around 23%, and neuropathic pain was observed to persist even when invasive treatment strategies such as total knee replacement were used.^{23,24}

In axial spondyloarthritis, both AS and non-radiographic axSpA, the presence of neuropathic pain is slightly over 30% and is related to lower quality of life, lower scores on patient assessment criteria, and higher functional limitation.^{25,26}

The first data related to neuropathic pain in PsA were obtained from the DANBIO study.²⁷ The presence of neuropathic pain was evaluated with the PainDETECT questionnaire (PDQ) in Danish database. Researchers who participated in this study investigated pain prevalence in various rheumatological diseases. In the context of PsA, the presence of neuropathic pain characteristics was demonstrated in 28% of patients; this is a higher percentage compared to both RA and axSpA. As seen in this study, neuropathic pain characteristics are considered to be common in PsA patients.

The relationship between clinical and laboratory parameters associated with the neuropathic pain presence in PsA is not well known and has not been studied adequately. Based on these assumptions, the aim of our study was to research the frequency of neuropathic pain in people with PsA disease and its relation to the clinical and laboratory parameters of the disease.

MATERIALS and METHODS

Patient Selection

A total of 45 PsA patients diagnosed according to The Classification Criteria for Psoriatic Arthritis were included in this study, which was conducted at Bezmialem Foundation University Hospital between January 2022 and March 2022. Exclusion criteria from the study were presence of other rheumatic diseases, diseases that commonly cause neuropathic pain such as fibromyalgia, diabetes mellitus, chronic kidney failure or chronic liver disease, the presence of active skin conditions other than psoriasis, the presence of inflammatory joint comorbidities (such as gout or calcium pyrophosphate crystal arthropathy), entrapment neuropathies (e.g., carpal tunnel syndrome), cervical or lumbar radiculopathies, and polyneuropathies supported by any etiology. Fibromyalgia was excluded using the 2016 fibromyalgia diagnostic criteria.¹²

Patients underwent a cross-sectional evaluation, with an objective musculoskeletal examination on the day of admission by an experienced clinician who aimed to investigate the effect of PsA, assessing functional status and neuropathic features of pain. Demographic data, comorbidities, ongoing treatment, and acute phase reactants were also recorded for each patient.

PsA Measurements

For objective measurements, the number of tender joints (0-68 joints), the number of swollen joints (0-66 joints), and the presence of enthesitis were determined by SPARCC (Spondyloarthritis Research Consortium of Canada).

In addition to the number of tender and swollen joints, the clinician's overall assessment [0-10 visual rating scale (VAS)] of the patient's disease activity, the patient's VAS pain assessment (0-10), and the C-reactive protein value (CRP; mg/dl) were used to calculate the DAPSA.¹⁶ DAPSA is a composite disease activity index specific to PsA and is an internationally accepted scale. It allows determination of disease activity status: ≤ 4 for remission, > 4 and ≤ 14 for low disease activity, > 14 and ≤ 28 for moderate disease activity, and > 28 for high disease activity.¹⁸

Using the SPARCC clinical score, 8 bilateral enthesitis sites (medial and lateral humeral epicondyles, supraspinatus muscle tendon greater humeral tubercle, greater femoral trochanter, quadriceps tendon placed at the upper pole of the patella, patellar ligament placed on the lower pole of the patella or on the tibial calcaneal tubercle, Achilles tendon calcaneus and plantar fascia calcaneus), we evaluated the absence (0) or presence (1) of pain by palpation.

Functional status was assessed with the Health Assessment Questionnaire (HAQ). HAQ assesses the degree of difficulty in performing common daily activities in 8 areas compared to the previous week. For each activity, the patient is asked to respond on a 4-point scale (0 = no difficulty, 3 = impossible), and the highest value for each functional area is accepted. The final score is given by the average of 8 values.²⁸

The Short Form-36 (SF-36) questionnaire was used to evaluate the quality of life. The SF-36 measures eight functions: physical function (PF), physical role "PR", bodily pain (BP), general health (GH), vitality (VT), social functioning (SF), emotional role (RE), and mental health (MH). Scoring was done in line with the suggestions of the developers of the questionnaire.²⁹

Evaluation of Neuropathic Pain

Pain Detect Questionnaire (PDQ) was used to evaluate neuropathic pain characteristics in our study. It was

developed by the German Neuropathic Pain Research Group 10 years ago. The questionnaire was validated in different clinical entities such as post-thoracotomy pain, neoplasms, low back pain, OA, fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS), and in the field of inflammatory joint diseases. It is a self-administered questionnaire which can distinguish the nociceptive components from the neuropathic components of pain.³⁰ The questionnaire, which does not require a physical examination and evaluates the patient's symptoms, investigates sensations related to the presence of neuropathic pain such as allodynia, hyperalgesia, dysesthesia, and sudden pain. The PDQ assesses the qualitative characteristics of the painful sensations (burning, tingling or prickling, pain evoked by light touch, sudden pain attacks, pain at cold or warm stimulus, numbness, mild pressure that triggers pain), and areas where the pain radiates are indicated on the mannequin. There is also a question for the temporal course of pain (score from -1 to 1 depending on the selected pain course model). The final score can range from 1 to 38. Patients scoring between 0 and 12 were considered as negative. Patients with scores of 13-18 and ≥ 19 were considered as probable and highly probable neuropathic pain patients, respectively, as shown in previous studies.^{31,32} Ribbjerg-Madsen et al. examined psychometric properties (Rasch analysis and test-retest analysis) of the PDQ in a large cohort of patients with inflammatory joint diseases (including PsA) and demonstrated that it was acceptable for pain classification.³³

Statistical Analysis

All data were analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0; IBM, Armonk, NY, USA). The data of patients with PsA were evaluated in terms of normal distribution using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Independent variables were age, body mass index (BMI), disease duration, use of biological agents, DMARD use, DAPSA, SPARCC, "HAQ", SF-36 score, VAS pain, erythrocyte sedimentation rate, and CRP. The demographic variables and clinical parameters of the patients were compared using the t-test or the χ^2 test. Patients with PDQ values of <12 or

≥ 13 were grouped as NeP negative and NeP positive and compared using the t-test within each group. P value <0.05 was considered as statistically significant.

RESULTS

A total of 45 patients (32 females [71.1%], 13 males [28.9%]) were included in the study. Mean duration of symptoms was 78.91 ± 95.8 months. There were 16 patients (35.6%) receiving NSAID therapy, 28 patients (62.2%) receiving DMARD therapy, and 13 patients (28.9%) receiving biological therapy. Mean and median values of demographic and clinical variables and the minimum and maximum values of clinical parameters are given in Table 1.

Among the patients included in the study, according to the Pain Detect questionnaire, 30 patients with NP (66.7%) and 15 patients without NP (33.3%) were detected. DAPSA scores showing disease activity were significantly higher in patients with high PDQ scores (Table 2). In relation to disease activity, the number of sensitive and swollen joints, pain score, patient's global evaluation, dactylitis and enthesitis scores and measured disease activity were statistically significantly higher in NP group than non-NP group. Morning stiffness in patients with NP was statistically significantly higher than in patients without NP ($p < 0.05$).

The VAS movement pain assessment test, which assesses the pain level of the patients during physical activity, was significantly higher in NP patients ($p < 0.05$).

The HAQ questionnaire that shows the degree of physical limitation was statistically significantly higher in the NP group than in the non-NP group ($p < 0.05$).

SF-36 body pain score, which assesses the perception of body pain, was statistically significantly higher in NP group ($p < 0.05$) (Table 2).

Table 1. Mean and median values of demographic and clinical variables and the minimum and maximum values of clinical parameters

Parameter	Group	N (%)	Parameter	Mean \pm SD	Median (Min-Max)
Education	Primary school	18 (40.0%)	Body Pain	37.78 \pm 19.07	41 (0 - 84)
	Secondary school	8 (17.8%)	CRP	6.1 \pm 12.66	1.2 (0.02 - 68)
	High school	11 (24.4%)	DAPSA	27.32 \pm 13.81	22.78 (7.5 - 64.77)
	University	8 (17.8%)	DN4	4.16 \pm 2.54	5 (0 - 9)
Type Of Disease	Axial spondyloarthritis	10 (22.2%)	ESR	14.96 \pm 10.55	15 (2 - 44)
	Oligoarticular	26 (57.8%)	General Health	42.98 \pm 15.7	45 (10 - 77)
	Poliarticular	9 (20.0%)	HAQ	10.07 \pm 8.46	8 (0 - 38)
Job	Not working	24 (53.3%)	Disease Duration (Months)	78.91 \pm 95.8	36 (1 - 420)
	Traveling business	14 (31.1%)	Mental Health	53.78 \pm 17.63	56 (12 - 80)
	Office	7 (15.6%)	Pain Detect	14.2 \pm 5.84	14 (1 - 26)
Alcohol	Not consuming	39 (86.7%)	Physical function	65.33 \pm 20.63	70 (20 - 100)
	Consuming	6 (13.3%)	Role emotional	35.56 \pm 39.19	33.33 (0 - 100)
Biological Treatment	No	32 (71.1%)	Role physical	30.0 \pm 36.38	25 (0 - 100)
	Yes	13 (28.9%)	Morning stiffness (mins)	32.58 \pm 48.14	15 (0 - 240)
Gender	Male	13 (28.9%)	Social functioning	61.4 \pm 24.27	62.5 (12.5 - 100)
	Female	32 (71.1%)	SPARCC	4.47 \pm 3.35	4 (0 - 16)
DMARD	No	17 (37.8%)	VAS Movement	6.24 \pm 1.94	6 (1 - 10)
	Yes	28 (62.2%)	VAS Rest	4.89 \pm 2.32	5 (0 - 10)
Marital Status	Single	5 (11.1%)	Vitality	31.11 \pm 17.12	30 (0 - 60)
	Married	40 (88.9%)	Age	44.24 \pm 9.26	44 (22 - 66)
NSAID	No	29 (64.4%)			
	Yes	16 (35.6%)			
Smoke	Non-smoker	24 (53.3%)			
	Smoker	21 (46.7%)			

CRP:C-reactive protein, DAPSA: The Disease Activity Index for Psoriatic Arthritis, DN4: Douleur Neuropathique 4 Questions, ESR: Erythrocyte sedimentation rate, HAQ: Health Assessment Questionnaire, SPARCC: Spondyloarthritis Research Consortium of Canada Enthesitis Index, VAS: Visual Analogue Scale

Table 2:

Parameter	NEUROPATHIC PAIN - PAIN DETECT QUESTIONNAIRE		
	Patients with NP (30)	Patients without NP (15)	P value
Body pain	33.07 ± 18.1	47.2 ± 17.93	0.017(S)
	32 (0 - 84)	51 (12 - 84)	
CRP	6.91 ± 14.85	4.46 ± 6.51	0.3(M)
	1.15 (0.02 - 68)	1.92 (0.2 - 26.13)	
DAPSA	31.66 ± 14.84	18.64 ± 4.72	0.001(M)
	28.11 (7.5 - 64.77)	17.78 (12.05 - 26.15)	
ESR	15.6 ± 10.8	13.67 ± 10.26	0.514(M)
	15 (2 - 44)	15 (4 - 43)	
General health	41.13 ± 15.72	46.67 ± 15.52	0.27(S)
	40 (10 - 72)	45 (15 - 77)	
HAQ	12.47 ± 8.89	5.27 ± 4.92	0.002(M)
	9.5 (1 - 38)	4 (0 - 19)	
Disease duration (Months)	78.13 ± 106.27	80.47 ± 73.82	0.322(M)
	24 (1 - 420)	60 (1 - 240)	
Mental health	50.13 ± 18.78	61.07 ± 12.69	0.066(M)
	52 (12 - 76)	64 (36 - 80)	
Pain Detect	17.4 ± 3.84	7.8 ± 3.3	<0.001(S)
	17 (10 - 26)	8 (1 - 12)	
Physical function	61.33 ± 21.17	73.33 ± 17.49	0.065(S)
	62.5 (20 - 100)	75 (30 - 100)	
Role emotional	35.56 ± 38.09	35.58 ± 42.68	0.99(M)
	33.33 (0 - 100)	0 (0 - 100)	
Role physical	22.5 ± 32.4	45.0 ± 40.31	0.065(M)
	0 (0 - 100)	50 (0 - 100)	
Morning stiffness(Mins)	44.2 ± 55.35	9.33 ± 8.42	0.003(M)
	22.5 (0 - 240)	10 (0 - 30)	
Social functioning	60.83 ± 22.44	62.53 ± 28.38	0.828(S)
	56.25 (25 - 100)	62.5 (12.5 - 100)	
VAS movement	6.83 ± 1.97	5.07 ± 1.28	0.001(M)
	8 (1 - 10)	5 (3 - 8)	
VAS rest	5.23 ± 1.74	4.2 ± 3.14	0.163(M)
	5 (2 - 9)	3 (0 - 10)	
Vitality	27.67 ± 16.23	38.0 ± 17.3	0.055(S)
	25 (0 - 55)	35 (0 - 60)	
Age	45.17 ± 9.18	42.4 ± 9.46	0.351(S)
	46 (22 - 64)	44 (22 - 66)	
SPARCC	4.8 ± 3.12	3.8 ± 3.78	0.12(M)
	4 (0 - 16)	3 (0 - 12)	

CRP:C-reactive protein, DAPSA: The Disease Activity Index for Psoriatic Arthritis, ESR: Erythrocyte sedimentation rate, HAQ: Health Assessment Questionnaire, VAS: Visual Analogue Scale, SPARCC: Spondyloarthritis Research Consortium of Canada Enthesitis Index

DISCUSSION

Our study shows that the prevalence of neuropathic pain is high in PsA patients (66.7%). In these patients, pain severity and disease activity measurements were higher. In a study conducted with RA patients, it was observed that RA patients with NP had significantly higher pain severity and disease activity measurements.⁵ Similar results were also obtained in our study. Additionally, depression rates were higher in patients with NP in this study.⁵ In another study, neuropathic pain prevalence was researched in patients with RA, PsA and SpA using PDQ and it was found to be 28% in PsA patients. Additionally, NP was detected at a higher rate than the two types of arthritis researched.¹³ Similar to our study, high disease activities were seen in NP patients in this study.

In that study, since fibromyalgia (FMS) patients were included in the study, distinction between FMS and NP is not clear.¹³ It was shown that PainDETECT questionnaire could not distinguish between FMS and NP.³⁴ But in our study, patients with FMS were not included according to ACR Appropriateness Criteria, and this is considered to increase the importance of the study.

In another study conducted in PsA patients by using PDQ, NP prevalence was found to be 42%.¹⁷ This study also shows that NP is seen at a high rate in PsA patients and affects disease activity.

In the field of both inflammatory and degenerative joint diseases, the mechanisms underlying pain symptoms have been the subject of intensive research in recent years. In particular, there is growing awareness that mechanisms including peripheral and central sensitization are involved as well as the nociceptive pathway.³⁵ Our results are consistent with those collected by Rifbjerg-Madsen et al., who first documented the significant prevalence of central pain from DANBIO registry data.²⁷

In a prognostic study conducted on patients diagnosed

with early RA, it was demonstrated that high PDQ scores at baseline resulted in low probability of Boolean remission at the 6th month evaluation.³⁶

The strength of our study is that it researched demographic and disease-specific clinical variables associated with the presence of neuropathic pain characteristics in PsA patients. Additionally, it is considered important to determine the presence of NP in PsA patients. Pain severity and disease activity have been shown to be high in these patients. It was considered that this situation may lead to a low response to treatment and a decrease in the success of treatment. Apart from this, in the HAQ and VAS Movement results, which evaluate physical activity, a statistically significant difference was found. It can be thought that this situation reduces the patient's quality of life and physical activity and affects the treatment response and the patient's expectations. In this regard, it is considered that recognition of the presence of NP and treating it in patients with PsA may also affect the success of PsA treatment.

The limitations of our study are that the cross-sectional evaluation did not allow prognostic evaluation, the mild effect of psoriasis in our case study, and the effect of skin disease on certain pain descriptors of PDQ.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it has been shown that NP component is frequently seen in PsA patients, and the presence of this parameter may have a negative effect on physical limitation and treatment success. It has been considered that the recognition of NP and regulation of its treatment could increase the treatment success. It has been shown that presence of NP can cause severe disease.

Authorship contribution

Conceptualization; MSK, OVY. Data curation; MSK, OVY. Formal analysis; MSK, OVY. Investigation; MSK, MK, OVY. Methodology; MSK, MK, OVY. Project administration; MSK, MK, OVY. Resources; MSK, OVY. Supervision;

MSK, OVY Validation; MSK. Roles/Writing-original draft;
MSK. Writing-review & editing; MK

Declaration of conflicting interests

The authors declared no conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship and/or publication of this article.

Ethical consent

The study protocol was approved by the Bezmialem Foundation University Faculty of Medicine Ethics Committee (2020-06/95). Written informed consent was obtained from each patient. The study was carried out in accordance with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki.

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Polypharmacy in Outpatients with Bipolar Disorder: Associated Factors and Treatment Characteristics in Türkiye

Türkiye'de Bipolar Bozukluk Tanılı Ayaktan Hastalarda Polifarmasi:
Tedavi Özellikleri ve İlişkili Faktörler

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Abstract

Introduction	Polypharmacy is frequently used in the treatment of bipolar disorder. We aimed to investigate polypharmacy rates, associated factors, and the types of drugs preferred in treatment among outpatients with bipolar disorder.
Materials and Methods	A total of 209 bipolar disorder patients attending an outpatient psychiatry clinic were included in this study. Drug types, active substances, and combination forms were examined.
Results	The rate of polypharmacy among bipolar outpatients was found at 79.40%. Antipsychotics were the most frequently preferred drug for the treatment. The most commonly used antipsychotic was quetiapine, whereas the mood stabilizer was sodium valproate and the antidepressant was paroxetine. The most common form of treatment for bipolar disorder was the combined use of a mood stabilizer and an antipsychotic.
Conclusion	In contrast to treatment guidelines, polypharmacy has virtually become a standard in the treatment of bipolar disorder. It appears that the adoption of polypharmacy in treatment will persist for a variety of reasons. As such, there is a need to develop new guidelines to guide psychiatrists in determining the patient groups and types of combinations in which combination therapy will be preferred. Moreover, interventions are needed to minimize the possible side effects, and risk of drug-drug interactions related to the use of multiple drugs, determine the benefit/harm ratio, and reduce unnecessary psychotropic drug use.
Keywords	Bipolar Disorder; Outpatients; Polypharmacy; Drug; Treatment; Combination

Öz

Amaç	Bipolar bozukluk tedavisinde polifarmasi sıklıkla kullanılmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, bipolar bozukluk tanılı ayaktan hastalarda polifarmasi oranlarını, ilişkili faktörleri ve tedavi tercih edilen ilaç türlerini araştırmayı amaçladık.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Bu çalışmaya bir ayaktan psikiyatri kliniğine devam eden 209 bipolar bozukluk tanılı hasta dahil edildi. Tedavide tercih edilen ilaç türleri, etken maddeler ve kombinasyon şekilleri incelendi.
Bulgular	Bipolar bozukluk tanılı ayaktan hastalarda polifarmasi oranı %79.40 bulundu. Tedavide en sık kullanılan ilaç grubu antipsikotik ilaçlardı. En fazla tercih edilen antipsikotik ketiapin, en sık kullanılan duyugdurum dengeleyici sodyum valproat ve en sık kullanılan antidepressan paroksetin idi. Bipolar bozukluk için en yaygın tedavi şekli, bir duyugdurum dengeleyici ve bir antipsikotik kombinasyonuydu.
Sonuç	Tedavi kılavuzlarında önerilen aksine, bipolar bozukluk tedavisinde polifarmasi standart tedavi haline gelmiştir. Bipolar bozukluk tedavisinde polifarmasi uygulaması çeşitli nedenlerle devam edecek gibi görünmektedir. Bu nedenle, polifarmasi tercih edilecek hasta grupları ve kombinasyon türlerinin belirlenmesinde psikiyatristlere yol gösterecek yeni kılavuzların geliştirilmesine ihtiyaç vardır. Ayrıca polifarmasiye bağlı olası yan etkileri ve ilaç-ilaç etkileşimi riskini en aza indirecek, kar/zarar oranını belirleyecek ve gereksiz psikotrop ilaç kullanımını azaltacak müdahalelere ihtiyaç vardır.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Bipolar Bozukluk; Ayaktan Hasta; Polifarmasi; İlaç; Tedavi; Kombinasyon



INTRODUCTION

Bipolar disorder is characterized by manic, hypomanic, and depressive episodes, evolving with remissions and relapses and requiring lifelong treatment, which affects 1 to 2% of the adult population.¹⁻³ This complex nature of the disorder often renders the treatment process complicated and challenging for clinicians.⁴ The pharmacological treatment aims to keep acute episodes under control, prevent relapses and recurrences, maintain remission for a long time and increase functionality.¹⁻³ Depending on the severity of the disorder, a mono- or multi-drug therapy may be administered. Yet, the disorder often requires a long-term, multi-drug regimen.^{1-3,5,6}

Polypharmacy means combining two or more psychotropic drugs in the treatment of bipolar disorder, which may involve mood stabilizers (MS), antipsychotics (AP), antidepressants (AD), and benzodiazepines (BDZ), at any period of the disease.^{1,7,8} Although numerous clinical guidelines have been developed, following these guidelines is not feasible in actual practice.⁴

Although multi-drug use is common and there are studies examining the characteristics and drug types associated with polypharmacy in bipolar disorder in the world, studies in Türkiye are limited.⁷ In this study, we aimed to examine the rates of polypharmacy, psychotropic drugs and combination forms in bipolar patients followed up in a psychiatry outpatient clinic and to present the drugs preferred in the treatment of bipolar disorder in Türkiye.

MATERIALS and METHODS

Sample and design

This study was conducted at an outpatient psychiatry clinic, between Jun to December 2021. Two hundred eighty four patients with bipolar disorder were followed up in the outpatient psychiatry clinic. Patients with mental retardation or neurological disease and who did not want to be participate to the study were excluded from the study. According to the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 209 pa-

tients with bipolar disorder, who were clinically stable, and medical treatment remained unchanged over the past 6 months were included in the study.

The diagnosis of bipolar disorder was confirmed by a psychiatrist according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5 (DSM-5) criteria.⁹ Ethics committee approval was obtained from the Clinical Research Ethics Committee of Samsun Training and Research Hospital with the date of 15.05.2021 and the number GOKA/2021/10/5. Written consent was observed from all patients.

MATERIAL and METHOD

The researchers created a sociodemographic data form that included age, gender, education level, duration of the disorder, and the number of hospitalizations. Also, a medical follow-up form was drawn up, which included the treatment characteristics. This study was conducted retrospectively from the medical records of patients followed in an outpatient psychiatry center.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS 25.0. The descriptive statistics were reported as mean±standard deviation for continuous numerical variables with normal distribution. All categorical variables were presented as the number of cases (n) and percentage (%).

RESULTS

Sociodemographic characteristics

The mean age of the participants was 46.6±13 years, and the mean duration of the disorder was 17.7±10 years. The majority of the subjects were female. Over half of the patients were, at least once, hospitalized. The mean number of drugs used daily was 2.3±10. The patients' sociodemographic characteristics are presented in Table 1.

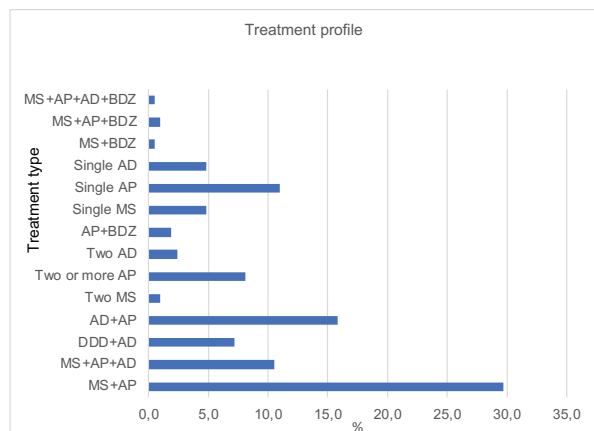
Table 1: Sociodemographic and clinical characteristics of the patients		
	Number (n)	Percent (%)
Sex		
Male	92	44.0
Female	117	56.0
Age		
24 years and under	10	4.80
25-34	29	13.90
35-44	52	24.90
45-54	59	28.20
55-64	36	17.20
65 years and older	23	11.0
Marital status		
Married	108	51.70
Single	64	30.60
Widowed	36	17.20
Divorced	1	0.50
Education		
Illiterate	12	5.70
Literate	3	1.40
Primary school	82	39.20
Middle school	33	15.80
High school	44	21.10
University	35	16.70
Occupation		
Employed	52	24.90
Unemployed	122	58.40
Retired	27	12.90
Disabled retired	8	3.80
Disease duration		
0-5 years	22	10.50
6-10 years	37	17.70
10 years and over	150	71.80
Hospitalization		
None	101	48.30
1-2 times	63	30.10
3-4 times	24	11.50
5 times and more	21	10.0
Hospitalization in the last 1 year		
No	196	93.80
Yes	13	6.20
Total	209	100.0

The mean age	46.6±13 (min 18, max 79 years)
The mean age of disease onset	29.2±13 (min 14, max 69 years)
The mean duration of illness	17.7±11 (min 1, max 57 years)
The mean number of hospitalization	1.8±35 (min 0, max 20 times)
The mean number of drugs	2.3±10 (min 1, max 6 drugs)

Treatment pattern

The polypharmacy rate of bipolar outpatients was 79.40%. The treatment often consisted of two or three different drugs (36.80% and 29.70%, respectively).

The widest form of polypharmacy was the combination of a MS and an AP, followed by the combination of an AP and an AD in the second, and the combination of a MS, an antipsychotic, and an antidepressant in the third. The characteristics of the patients' treatment patterns are shown in Figure 1.



*MS: Mood stabilizer, **AP: Antipsychotics, ***AD: Antidepressants, ****BDZ: Benzodiazepines

Figure 1: Treatment profile

Types of drugs

The APs were the most frequently preferred drugs in the treatment of bipolar disorder (78.0%), followed by the MSs (54.10%). The rate of AD use was 43.50% and BDZ use was 3.80%. By active substance, the most preferred drug

was quetiapine, followed by sodium valproate and aripiprazole (37.30%, 27.30%, and 21.50%, respectively). Lithium and olanzapine ranked fourth with an equal rate of use (20.60%, each). Of the patients using antipsychotics, 92.60% were using atypical APs, and of the patients using ADs, 56.0% were using ADs from the SSRI.

Mood stabilizers

The rate of MS use was 54.10%. The most common preferred MS was sodium valproate (27.30%), followed by lithium second (20.60%). Lamotrigine or carbamazepine was less (9.10% and 5.70%, respectively).

Antipsychotics

The rate of patients using at least one AP was 78.0%, of which 48.80% were using only one AP and 29.20% of the two or more APs. Most of the APs were atypical APs (77.0%). The most preferred AP was quetiapine (37.30%), followed by aripiprazole and olanzapine, (21.50% and 20.60%, respectively).

Antidepressants

The rate of AD use was 43.50% in bipolar disorder. Of 38.30%, have one AD, whereas 5.30% had two different ADs. Patients whose treatment includes AD, 8.10% were not taking any MS or AP. Most of the ADs were SSRIs (22.50%), whereas SNRIs were 14.40%, and SSRIs+SNRIs were 1.40%. The rates of TCAs and other ADs were fairly low (5.20%). Among SSRIs, the most preferred drug was paroxetine (8.60%), and duloxetine (8.10%) was in SNRIs.

Benzodiazepines

The use of BDZ was fairly low (3.80%). The most frequently preferred was lorazepam (1.40%). Treatment patterns and types of drugs were shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Drug categories and active substances		
	Number (n)	Percent (%)
Mood Stabilizer		
No	96	45.90
Yes	113	54.10
Na valproate	57	27.30
Lithium carbonate	43	20.60
Carbamazepine	12	5.70
Lamotrigine	19	9.10
Number of Mood Stabilizers		
None	96	45.90
Single MS	96	45.90
Two of MSs	17	8.10
Antipsychotic		
No	46	22.0
Yes	163	78.0
Risperidone	25	12.0
Olanzapine	43	20.60
Quetiapine	78	37.30
Clozapine	2	1.0
Aripiprazole	45	21.50
Paliperidone	16	7.70
Amisulpiride	13	6.20
Haloperidol	7	3.30
Others (Chlorpromazine, zuclopenthixol, pimozide, trifluoperazine)	8	3.80
Number of Antipsychotic		
No AP	46	22.0
Single AP	102	48.80
Two of APs	52	24.90
Three of APs	7	3.30
Four of APs	2	1.0
AP group		
No AP	46	22.0
Atypical AP	151	72.20
Typical AP	2	1.0
Atypical+Typical AP together	10	4.80
Antidepressant		
No	118	56.50
Yes	91	43.50
Only SSRI	45	21.50
SSRI+Other AD	2	1.0

Only SNRI	27	12.90
SNRI+Other AD	3	1.50
SSRI+SNRI	3	1.40
Only other ADs (TCA, mirtazapine, bupropion, vortioxetine, etc.)	11	5.20
Number of antidepressants		
No AD	118	56.50
Single AD	80	38.30
Two of ADs	11	5.30
Type of antidepressant		
No AD	118	56.60
Yes	91	43.50
SSRI		
Sertraline	15	7.20
Paroxetine	18	8.60
Escitalopram	10	4.80
Citalopram	3	1.40
Fluoxetine	2	1.0
Fluvoxamine	3	1.40
SNRI		
Duloxetine	17	8.10
Venlafaxine	15	7.20
Other ADs		
Mirtazapine	4	1.90
Clomipramine	7	3.30
Amitriptyline	2	1.0
Bupropion	2	1.0
Vortioxetine	3	1.40
Milnacipran	1	0.50
AD use without MS or AP		
No	192	91.90
Yes	17	8.10
Benzodiazepine		
No BDZ	201	96.20
Yes	8	3.80
Lorazepam	3	1.40
Alprazolam	1	0.50
Diazepam	2	1.0
Clonazepam	2	1.0
Total	209	100.0
*MS: Mood stabilizer, **AP: Antipsychotic, ***AD: Antidepressant, ****BDZ: Benzodiazepine High rates are shown in bold style.		

Variables associated with monotherapy/polypharmacy

No statistically significant differences were found between the monotherapy and polypharmacy groups for age, gender, marital status, education attainment, occupational status, age of onset of the disorder, duration of the disorder, hospitalization, number of hospitalizations, use of extended-release antipsychotics, and benzodiazepines ($p>0.05$). Hence, the age was notably higher in the polypharmacy group ($p=0.007$).

DISCUSSION

In this study, the polypharmacy rate of bipolar outpatients was 79.40%. Although not recommended in treatment guidelines, numerous studies have shown that polypharmacy is widely preferred.^{3,10} In addition, there are also studies reporting that polypharmacy may be more effective than monotherapy.¹¹ The studies on bipolar disorder showed that the rates of polypharmacy range from 50 to 93.7%.^{1,3-5,8,11-14} The discrepancies between the results reported in similar studies may be accounted for by methodological aspects (e.g., classification of drugs, sample size, drug classes, countries' treatment policies, and physicians' treatment practices).^{15,16}

Sociodemographic data

The majority of patients included in the study were female (56.0%). In general, the prevalence of bipolar disorder is equal in males and females. Yet, some studies about treatment patterns indicated that the disorder is more prevalent in females.^{1,4,5,8,12,17-19} It is also noted that the higher number of females may be because women are more compliant with the treatment.⁵ The high number of female subjects in our study may be attributed to the women being more likely to adhere to the treatment as compared to men.

In the present study, 51.70% of the patients were married and 39.20% had primary education. Studies on the characteristics of treatment for bipolar disorder report that the disorder is more common among married.^{5,18,19} Almost half of the patients with bipolar disorder in Türkiye have

an educational background of 5 years or less.²⁰ Our data are consistent with previous studies.

Our study found that the mean age of the patients was 46.60 years. Although bipolar disorder is expected more frequently at a younger age, similar studies showed that the mean age of patients with bipolar disorder ranges from 40 to 43 years.^{4,5,10-12,19} In a study conducted in Poland, the mean age was reported to be 46.2 years, which is quite similar to our data.¹¹

Polypharmacy is more common at younger ages in bipolar disorder.⁴ However, we found that the rate of polypharmacy was higher in patients aged 55 to 64 years. In our study, the duration of the disorder was high, and the number of patients with a duration of 10 years or more was high. So, this study involved a chronic group of patients. Bipolar disorder evolves more severely in chronic patients, who have more frequent manic episodes, the increased frequency of polypharmacy is not surprising.

The mean number of drugs used daily was 2.3 ± 1.0 . Of the 20-33% of bipolar patients are reported to take 4 or more psychotropic drugs during hospitalization.¹⁴ In parallel with our study, the studies conducted with outpatients showed that the mean number of drugs used daily varies between 2.4 and 3.8.^{1,8,12} The clinical stability of patients included in this study may be the reason for decreased number of drugs used daily.

Bipolar disorder and polypharmacy

We found that the rate of polypharmacy was 79.40% among clinically stable bipolar outpatients. According to the Systematic Treatment Enhancement Program for Bipolar Disorder (STEP-BD), a large-scale study on bipolar disorder, and the majority of whom are outpatients, 40% of the patients with bipolar disorder, use three or more drugs.¹⁴ Various studies investigating rates of polypharmacy in bipolar disorder have found that the rate of polypharmacy ranges from 50% to 93.7%.^{1,3-5,8,11-14} The rate of

polypharmacy in our study is consistent with data in the literature.

A variety of drugs are used in the acute period and prophylactic treatment in bipolar disorder.⁶ Both the broad range of symptoms and the recurrent, episodic, and heterogeneous nature of the disorder require combinations in treatment. As such, the likelihood of polypharmacy increases.^{6,14-17} As well, studies suggest that no adequate response to monotherapy is achieved in the acute period, that monotherapy fails to reduce relapse rates and maintain remission, and that regimens with the combination of 2 or 3 drugs are more effective in achieving remission.^{1,7,8} The present clinical practice shows that patients with bipolar disorder are treated on average with 3 to 4 different psychotropic drugs. Whilst its effectiveness remains largely unknown due to a lack of controlled studies, there is evidence from the United States and Europe that polypharmacy is frequently used.³

The most prevalent cause of polypharmacy in bipolar disorder is the failure in achieving remission.¹⁶ The most comprehensive study conducted on bipolar disorder, the STEP-BD, revealed that, after a two-year follow-up period, 42% of symptomatic patients showed no improvement despite treatment.¹⁴ It has recently been reported that polypharmacy is more potent in prophylactic treatment. The unavailability of an ideal MS agent for bipolar disorder has prompted clinicians to boost the treatment with a second ineffective or partially effective drug.¹¹ For these reasons, the use of combined drugs for bipolar disorder is now recommended.¹⁵ Beyond these, polypharmacy is driven by many factors, such as the episodic nature of the bipolar disorder, high rates of recurrence in patients using only MS, comorbid psychiatric illnesses, attempts to control side effects, and a poor understanding of the pathophysiology of the disorder.^{1,8}

The studies on current treatment guidelines for bipolar disorder have revealed that these guidelines are incoher-

ent and lacking in some respects. The guidelines state that patients with different clinical characteristics (e.g., with rapid cycles or a chronic course) are not considered, that psychiatric and medical comorbidities are ignored, and that no specific recommendations for particular purposes are made.¹⁴ Polypharmacy is described as the treatment regimen that does not follow treatment guidelines but makes the greatest contribution to treatment for bipolar disorder.²¹ The STEP-BD study found that the patients who received monotherapy were less than 20%.²² Today, polypharmacy is recognized as the norm rather than an exception in the treatment of bipolar disorder.¹⁰ Using two MSs or one MS with an atypical AP has now become a standard practice in the treatment of patients.¹⁷

Types of combinations

We found that the most preferred treatment for bipolar disorder was the combination of a MS and an AP drug. The combinations include at least one MS and one AP with a rate of 41.60%. There is evidence from randomized controlled studies that the combination of a MS and an atypical AP is more effective, especially in acute mania¹¹. It appears that combinations vary according to clinicians' preferences or countries' economic policies on health care.^{8,11,12} The studies from different countries reported that the most widely used type of polypharmacy was the combination of MS+AP, which is similar to our data.^{1,10,11,13} Our results confirm previous evidence that the use of MS+AP in the treatment of bipolar disorder is more effective than the use of either drug alone.^{1,23}

Types of drugs

We found that AP drugs were the most often preferred drugs in bipolar disorder, followed by MSs in the second, and ADs in the third (78.0%, 54.10%, and 43.50%, respectively). BDZs were found to be preferred minimally. The literature shows that MS use in bipolar disorder ranges from 82% to 92.4%, with AP ranging from 32.0% to 53.8%, AD from 15% to 66.7%, and BDZ from 7.8% to 42.5%.^{1,5,8,11,12}

In our study, we found that the rates of MS and BDZ use are lower, whilst the rate of AD use is consistent with the literature, and the rate of AP use is higher than reported in the literature. There was a significant increase in the use of atypical APs and a decrease in the number of patients treated with MS between 1998 and 2009.¹¹ A recent study surveying treatment practice in bipolar disorder found that rates of MS use have decreased and the use of APs has increased in recent years.⁶ Besides, a study conducted in our country in 2014 reported that APs were used for a longer period in patients with manic/hypomanic episodes and psychotic symptoms in bipolar disorder, and the use of APs became more common and the duration of use was prolonged.¹⁹ Although our study did not consider the type of episode in the past and the presence of psychotic symptoms during the attack, the use of APs in preference to MSs may have been affected by the type of attack and the presence of psychotic symptoms.

Use of mood stabilizers

Our study showed that sodium valproate is more preferred than lithium. Although there are new treatment regimens available, lithium is still recognized as the most effective treatment for reducing the recurrence of episodes and is recommended as first-line therapy by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).²⁴ However, despite NICE recommendations, it is evident that lithium is not used sufficiently in clinical practice, where other mood stabilizers, and especially atypical APs, are becoming more popular.^{2,6} Lithium can effectively prevent recurrences in only one-third of patients. Accordingly, many studies from a variety of countries confirmed that the drugs used in the treatment of bipolar disorder have undergone significant changes over time.² It is also reported that the preference for lithium has decreased over the years, antiepileptic and AP drugs have been prescribed more, and even atypical antipsychotics have replaced lithium.^{2,25,29} On the other hand, sodium valproate is the most widely prescribed drug for bipolar disorder in certain countries.^{10,11} Hence, the prevalence of sodium valproate use as MS among our

patients supports the view that preferences in bipolar disorder treatment have changed.

Use of antipsychotics

We found that the most frequently preferred drugs for the treatment of bipolar disorder were APs. The most important development in the past was the awareness that lithium, valproate, and carbamazepine have a mood-stabilizing effect on bipolar disorder. Yet, the proof that atypical APs are effective in the treatment of acute attacks, in the late 21st century, has led to these drugs being referred to as second-generation mood stabilizers.¹¹ As a consequence, the preference for atypical APs in the treatment of bipolar disorder has dramatically increased.²⁵ Atypical APs are now recommended for the acute and maintenance phases of the disorder.⁵

Quetiapine was found to be the most preferred AP drug in our patients, followed by olanzapine and aripiprazole, respectively. The Turkish Psychiatric Association's Guidelines for the Treatment of Bipolar Disorder indicate that quetiapine is superior to the combined or single use of lithium and sodium valproate in the prophylactic treatment. When used alone, its antidepressant effect is superior to that of lithium, along with similar efficacy to lithium in preventing mania or hypomania.²⁶ Unlike other atypical APs, quetiapine works well in all stages of bipolar disorder (manic/mixed episode/depression), in both acute and maintenance treatment. Therefore, treatment guidelines recommend the use of quetiapine as first- and second-line treatment for all stages of bipolar disorder.^{11,25} The fact that quetiapine was the most frequently preferred AP drug in our study is consistent with treatment guidelines, which suggests that it may be the right choice for the treatment of bipolar disorder.

Use of antidepressants

In our study, the rate of AD use in bipolar disorder was 43.50%. If AD is required in bipolar disorder, it is recommended that the duration of use be kept short and tapered

quickly once improvement is achieved.²⁷ However, it is also reported that 15-20% of patients become depressed again after discontinuing AD, indicating the need for AD.¹ A large-scale national study from Denmark reported that the rate of AD use ranged from 40% to 61.5% across patient groups.²⁵ However, the STEP-BD study, revealed that the rate of AD use in bipolar disorder was 40.6%.²⁸ Although the rate of AD use we obtained appears high, it is consistent with the rates reported previously.

The most frequently prescribed AD group was SSRIs (21.50%), with the most frequently preferred AD was paroxetine. The rate of SSRI use was reported as about 29% by Holzapfel et al., and 21.6% in the STEP-BD study.^{1,28} The guidelines for the treatment of bipolar disorder recommend the use of SSRIs owing to the higher risk of rapid cycling or manic switch with newer antidepressants and tricyclic agents.²⁵ Whereas we did not evaluate psychiatric comorbidity, the reason that paroxetine was preferred more may be attributed to the fact that our patients with bipolar disorder were accompanied by anxiety disorders.

We find that the rates of use of ADs in both the SSRI and non-SSRI groups are close to each other. The high rate of use of ADs other than SSRIs appears to be risky in terms of rapid cycling or manic switch. This may imply that physicians lack sufficient information about the risks of attack or are ignorant of the risk.

Use of benzodiazepines

The rate of BDZ use was quite low (3.80%). The rates of BDZ use in bipolar disorder have reported the rates between 5% and 40%.^{5,11} The use of BDZ in bipolar disorder stems either from the prolongation of the polypharmacy process or from the inability to adequately control the attacks. BDZs are typically used in the acute attack period.²⁴ The predominance of lorazepam use as a BDZ drug in our study confirms this information. The low rates of BDZ use in this study may be linked to clinically stable patients included in the study.

This study has some limitations. First, conditions such as comorbid psychiatric disorders that may cause polypharmacy have not been evaluated. Second, the severity of the disorder, the number and types of attacks in the past, and the presence of psychotic symptoms accompanying the attack were not examined. A further limitation is the lack of assessment of drug compliance. Addressing these issues in future studies may help to establish a causal relationship in the preference for combinations and to develop more rational treatment protocols. Finally, this study does not include any hypotheses as it is a prevalence study examining the polypharmacy rates of a group of patients with bipolar disorder.

CONCLUSION

This study presents an example of bipolar disorder treatment practices, drug and combination preferences reflecting Türkiye. In this study, the rate of polypharmacy was found to be high. Therefore, psychiatrists in our country are advised to be careful about drug-drug interactions. In addition, it should be kept in mind that the use of multiple drugs may impair drug compliance in a disease such as bipolar disorder that requires regular drug treatment. Future studies are needed to cover the effect of polypharmacy on drug compliance and drug-drug interactions in polypharmacy in bipolar disorder.

Author Contributions

Study design: NA, Data collection: FÇ, Statistical evaluation: NA, Supervision: FÇ and NK, Writing – original draft: NA Writing – review & editing: NA, FÇ, NK.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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Ganoderma Lucidum Fruiting Body Dry Extract Inhibits Cell Proliferation and Induces Apoptosis in Breast Cancer Cells by Activating Both Caspase-8 and Caspase-9

Ganoderma Lucidum Fruiting Body Dry Extract, Hem Kaspaz-8 Hem De Kaspaz-9'u Aktive Ederek Hücre Proliferasyonunu İnhibe Eder ve Meme Kanseri Hücrelerinde Apoptozu İndükler

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Abstract

Introduction	Breast cancer is one of the most prominent causes of mortality among women worldwide due to factors such as aggressive behavior of the cancer and resistance to chemotherapeutic agents. Resistance to chemotherapeutic drugs in cancer treatment is a common phenomenon, especially in progressive diseases with a high prevalence. Therefore the current study aimed to demonstrate the anti-cancer effects of Ganoderma Lucidum (GL) on MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 cell lines.
Materials and Methods	We showed the effect of GL on cell proliferation using the MTS method, its effect on clone formation with a clonogenic test, and we also evaluated whether the apoptotic pathway was activated by western blot.
Results	GL significantly inhibited cell proliferation depending on the dose in MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 cell lines and it significantly reduced the number of colonies compared to non-treated cells. In addition, GL induced the initiation of apoptosis in MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 cells, as evidenced by an enhanced level of caspase-8 and caspase-9 and decreased expression of PARP.
Conclusion	These results demonstrated the molecular mechanism underlying the anti-cancer effects of GL, suggesting that GL might be useful in anticancer therapy. Novel products, such as GL, undoubtedly have promise for the future.
Keywords	Ganoderma Lucidum, Breast cancer, apoptosis, natural products

Öz

Amaç	Meme kanseri, agresif davranışı ve kemoterapötik ajanlara direnç gibi faktörler nedeniyle dünya çapında kadınlar arasında en önemli ölümlerden biridir. Kanser tedavisinde kemoterapötik ilaçlara direnç, özellikle prevalansı yüksek olan ilerleyici hastalıklarda sık görülen bir olgudur. Bu nedenle mevcut çalışma, Ganoderma Lucidum (GL)'ün MDA-MB-231 ve MCF-7 hücre hatları üzerindeki anti-kanser etkilerini göstermeyi amaçladı.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	GL'nin hücre proliferasyonu üzerindeki etkisini MTS yöntemi ile, klon oluşumu üzerindeki etkisini klonojenik test ile gösterdik ve ayrıca apoptotik yolun aktive edilip edilmediği western blot yöntemi ile değerlendirdik.
Bulgular	GL, MDA-MB-231 ve MCF-7 hücre hatlarında doza bağlı olarak hücre proliferasyonunu önemli ölçüde inhibe etti ve tedavi edilmemiş hücrelere kıyasla koloni sayısını önemli ölçüde azalttı. Ek olarak, GL'nin, MDA-MB-231 ve MCF-7 hücrelerinde apoptozu indüklediği artan kaspaz-8 ve kaspaz-9 seviyesi ve azalmış PARP ekspresyonu ile kanıtlandı.
Sonuç	Bu sonuçlar, GL'nin antikanser etkilerinin altında yatan moleküler mekanizmayı gösterdi ve GL'nin antikanser tedavisinde faydalı olabileceğini düşündürdü. GL gibi yeni ürünler şüphesiz gelecek vaat ediyor.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Ganoderma Lucidum, meme kanseri, apoptoz, doğal ürünler



INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the increasing number of cases and deaths has made breast cancer the world's most prevalent malignancy.^{1,2} According to Global Cancer Statistics (GLOBOCAN), worldwide there are almost 19.3 million new cancer diagnoses and approximately 10 million deaths from cancer. Breast cancer (BC) is the most common type of cancer with an estimated 2.3 million new diagnoses.³ BC is generally diagnosed by the presence or absence of three receptors identified as estrogen receptor (ER), progesterone receptor (PR), and human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2). Triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC) is a subtype of BC that lacks expression of the three receptors. TNBC accounts for approximately 15%–20% of all breast cancer cases.^{2,4} In the treatment of breast cancers that are positive for one of the three receptors, appropriate hormone treatments according to the receptor they carry usually gives effective results. TNBC shows a more aggressive clinical behavior and poor prognosis versus other types of BC, and survival rates tend to be lower due to widespread metastasis or drug resistance in addition to the absence of effective targeted therapies.^{2,4-6} These results mean that the hormones estrogen and progesterone, or the HER2 protein, do not induce the growth of TNBC. Hence, they do not respond to hormonal therapy targeting ER and PR or medicines that target HER2 protein receptors. In recent years, many therapeutic options have emerged in the fight against metastatic breast carcinoma. However, these therapies frequently fail due to the development of resistance. Therefore, there is an urgent need for the development of alternative and more effective therapeutic strategies for the treatment of BC.^{2,4,7,8}

Ganoderma Lucidum (GL) is a type of mushroom that is widely used in traditional treatments in China and Asian countries and is also known as the mushroom of immortality due to its superior therapeutic properties.⁹ Additionally, it has recently attracted great attention due to its anti-tumorigenic effects in various types of cancer and tumor models.^{10,13} GL has a large number of pharma-

cological actions, such as anti-oxidative, immunity-boosting, anti-inflammatory, and antitumor properties. The effect of GL against cancer cells has been summarized in a limited number of studies and has been shown to affect many cancer cell lines via apoptosis with activation of the caspase cascade.^{14,15} Moreover, according to the information obtained from the studies, it is thought that GL may serve as a practical anticancer agent by inducing caspases in various cancer types.¹⁶⁻¹⁸ Similarly, Ganoderma extracts or components from GL have previously been reported to possess antitumor activities for breast cancer.¹⁹⁻²² Although these and other studies have reported the anti-cancer effects of GL in BC cells^{16,23}, the molecular mechanisms of the anti-proliferative effects of GL in MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 cells have not been characterized in detail. Therefore, we aimed to examine the molecular mechanisms of the effects of GL on these cell lines.

MATERIALS and METHODS

This prospective study took place in Erciyes University, Faculty of Medicine, Genome Stem Cell Center (GENKOK) in 2019. MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 breast cancer cell lines were obtained from the American Type Culture Collection (Manassas, VA, USA).

Cell culture and GL reagents (GL Fruiting Body Dry Extract)

GL Fruiting Body Dry Extract was obtained from Sigma-Aldrich (Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, USA). According to the manufacturer, this sample contains NLT 0.3% of ganoderic acid D and ganoderenic acid D. This was prepared at six different doses (5, 10, 20, 40, 80 and 100 μ M) using an adequate volume of dimethylsulfoxide (DMSO, Sigma-Aldrich). In addition to these groups, in order to compare the experimental groups, the DMSO group, which was applied to the cells in the percentage of GL dissolved, and the NT (Non-treatment) group, which was treated with nothing, were formed. The stock solution of GL was stored at 4°C and diluted in FBS-free DMEM and applied to MDA-MB-231 and MCF-cells at certain concentrations

for 24 h or 48 h.

Cell culture

Cell lines were cultured in DMEM medium (Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, MO) with addition of penicillin (100 units/ml), streptomycin (100 µg/ml) and 10% heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS). Cells were incubated at 37°C in a humidified incubator with 5% CO₂. They were evaluated for viability and contamination using an inverted microscope. When the cells covered 80-90% of the flask area in which they were seeded, they were removed with trypsin-EDTA and passaged. When sufficient cells were obtained for the study, cells were counted on a Thoma slide with trypan blue.

Cell viability and proliferation assays

Cells treated with GL were evaluated for cell viability and proliferation using the MTS (3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-5-(3-carboxymethoxyphenyl)-2-(4-sulfophenyl)-2H-tetrazolium) assay (Promega, Madison, WI). MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 cells were seeded in appropriate quantities in each well of a 96-well plate (1.5×10³ cells/ well) and incubated at 37°C overnight. After incubation, the cells were treated with different doses of GL (5µM, 10 µM, 20 µM, 40 µM, 80 µM and 100 µM) for 24 and 48 hr. After 48 hours, a mix containing MTS and phenazine metho-sulfate (20:1 v/v) was supplemented to the cells and they were incubated at 37°C for 30 minutes. The results were obtained by measuring absorbance at 450 nm using an ELISA Reader (Promega Glomax Multi Detection System).

Colony formation assays

A clonogenic test was performed to examine the effect on colony formation of GL for MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 cells. For this, the cells were seeded in six-well plates (1.5×10³ cells/well) and incubated overnight at 37°C. After incubation, the cells were treated with different doses of GL and were kept in an incubator for approximately 2 weeks to follow the growth of the cells. After incubation,

the cells were washed with Dulbecco's phosphate-buffered saline (DPBS) by removing the medium, and the colonies were made visible with crystal violet. The numbers of colonies were counted using the Image J Software program.

Western Blot analysis

Cells were seeded in 25-cm² culture flasks (3.5×10⁵ cells/4 ml medium) for western blot analyses. After GL treatment, the cells were collected with trypsin-EDTA and washed twice with DPBS. Cells were lysed by adding lysis solution to the cell pellet after centrifugation. The total protein concentration of samples was defined with a detergent-compatible protein assay kit (DC kit; Bio-Rad, Hercules, CA). Protein values at 40 µg for each sample were determined using absorbance measurement at 750 nm and accordingly, aliquots containing loading buffer and distilled water were prepared for each sample. Samples were loaded on a gel and were analyzed by sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS)-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis with a 4% a 20% gradient for protein separation. The SDS-PAGE gel was electrotransferred to polyvinylidene difluoride membranes (PVDF) with the western blot method. Blocking buffer was used to block the membrane for 60 min at room temperature and then membranes were washed with TBS-T. After washing, the membranes were treated with the following primary antibodies diluted in TBS-T containing 5% dry milk: cleaved-caspase-8 (cell-signaling, USA), caspase-8 (protein tech, USA), cleaved-caspase-9 (cell-signaling, USA), caspase-9 (protein tech, USA) and PARP (protein tech, USA) and were incubated overnight at 4°C. After incubation, the membranes were washed with TBS-T and were treated with suitable secondary antibodies. Chemiluminescence detection refers to a detection method that exploits the interaction of an antibody and antigen and was performed with Clarity Western ECL Substrate (Biorad). The ChemiDoc MP Imaging System (Biorad) was used for visualized blots.

Statistical Analysis

All experiments were repeated 3 times to minimize the

margin of error and the data was summarized as group means with standard deviations (SD) using Graphpad PRISM (Graphpad Software Inc., Version 8.0d) program for statistical analysis. Results in terms of statistical significance were analyzed using the Student t-test and one-way ANOVA. The p value less than 0.05 was regarded as statistically significant.

RESULTS

GL inhibits breast cancer cell proliferation and colony formation

To determine the effects of GL on cell proliferation of MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 cells, we performed an MTS assay after 24 h and 48 h treatment with GL at doses ranging between 5 and 100 μ M. Cell viability showed a decrease at increasing GL concentrations in both breast cancer cell lines and there was no significant change between the two-time points (24 and 48 h).

This assay demonstrated that GL had almost no cytotoxic effects at the 5 and 10 μ M concentrations in MDA-MB 231 cells. The cell viability seemed to decrease at concentrations higher than 20 μ M and showed a statistically significant decrease in viability at the 40 μ M concentration of GL treatment (Figure 1A, $p < 0.01$). However, the treatment concentration became more effective as the exposure time increased. The MDA-MB-231 cell line did not show a significant change in cell viability when exposed to 20 μ M GL at 24 h of treatment while it significantly decreased at 48 h, as shown in Fig 1A. In addition, we formed a DMSO group to test the effect of DMSO, which we used to dissolve GL, on cells. There was a significant difference in cell viability between the NT group, that is, the cell group to which we did not apply anything, and the DMSO group ($p < 0.05$), so we compared the GL doses with the DMSO group. In MCF-7 cells, GL had almost no cytotoxic effects at the 5 and 10 μ M concentrations. The cell viability showed a statistically significant decrease at the 20 μ M ($p < 0.01$) and 40 μ M ($p < 0.0001$) concentrations, as shown in Fig 1B. On the other hand, the 80 μ M and 100 μ M concentrations of

GL led to an almost complete elimination of MCF-7 viable cells. In MCF-7 cells, there was no significant change between the two-time points (24 and 48 h). Moreover, a significant difference was not observed between the NT group, that is, the cell group to which we did not apply anything, and the DMSO group (Figure 1A).

We performed a clonogenic assay to determine the effects of GL on colony formation for 10 days in MDA-MB-231 cell lines (Figure 2A). We found that there was a significant reduction in the number of colonies at doses of 5 μ M and 10 μ M but we did not observe any colony formation at doses of 15 μ M and 20 μ M (Figure 2B). These results were significant compared to NT and DMSO groups. In MCF-7 cells, there was a significant reduction in the number of colonies at doses of 10 μ M and 15 μ M and we did not observe any colonies at a dose of 20 μ M (Figure 3 A-B). These results were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

GL stimulates both intrinsic and extrinsic apoptotic-death of BC cells

To assess whether GL contributes to the apoptosis-related death of BC cells, we analyzed the ability of GL to induce apoptotic cascades for 24h and 48h treatment using western blot analysis (Figure 2). GL treatment induced activation of the initiator caspase-9 (as evidenced by an increase of the 35 kDa cleaved form) in the intrinsic pathway and activation of the initiator caspase-8 (as evidenced by an increase of the 18, 41, 43 kDa cleaved forms) in the extrinsic pathway. PARP expression was significantly decreased in both MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 BC cells treated with GL for 24h and 48h treatments (Figure 4-5).

Our results suggest that activation of caspases comes from specific cleavage of the precursor protein, so we examined the expression of caspase-8, caspase-9, cleavage of caspase-8, and cleavage of caspase-9 using Western analysis 24h and 48h after GL treatment (Figure 4-5). In this study, with the decrease in caspase 8 and caspase 9 expression together with the increase in cleaved-caspase 8 and

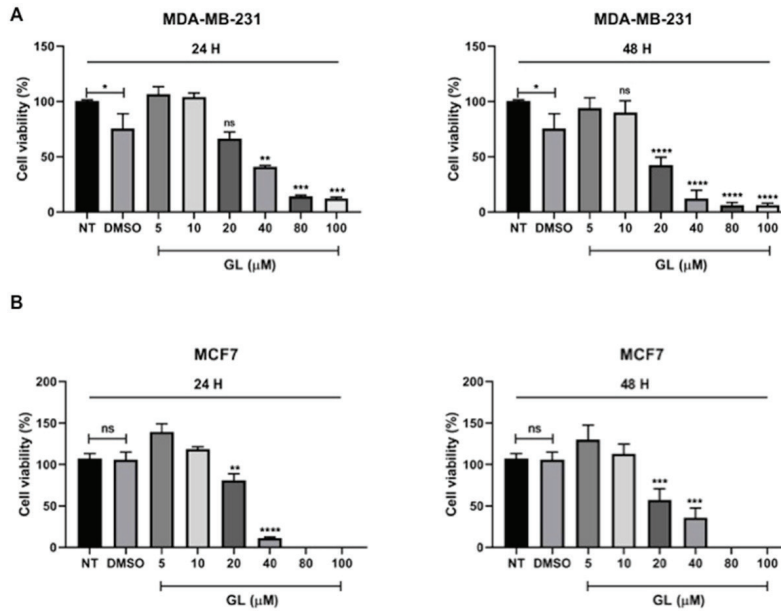


Fig. 1: Cell viability determined with MTS assay after treatment of MDA-MB-231 (A) and MCF-7 (B) cell lines with serial doses (5µM, 10 µM, 20 µM, 40 µM, 80 µM and 100 µM) of GL for 24h and 48h. Data were measured after 24 h and 48 h. Values less than 0.05 compared to control were considered significant (** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$, **** $p < 0.0001$).

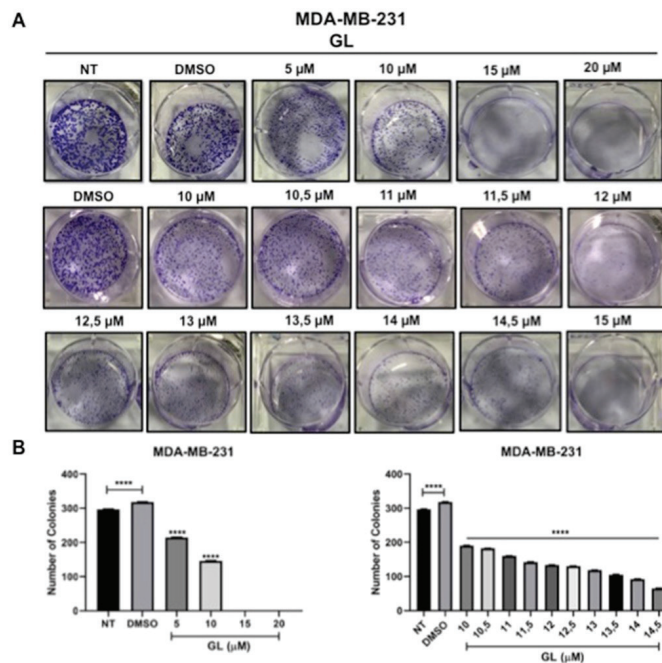


Fig. 2: Effect of GL on colony formation in MDA-MB-231. MDA-MB-231 cells were assessed for colony formation by staining with crystal violet and colony areas were counted with image J at the end of 14 days for MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7. Data are presented as mean \pm SD (**** $p < 0.0001$).

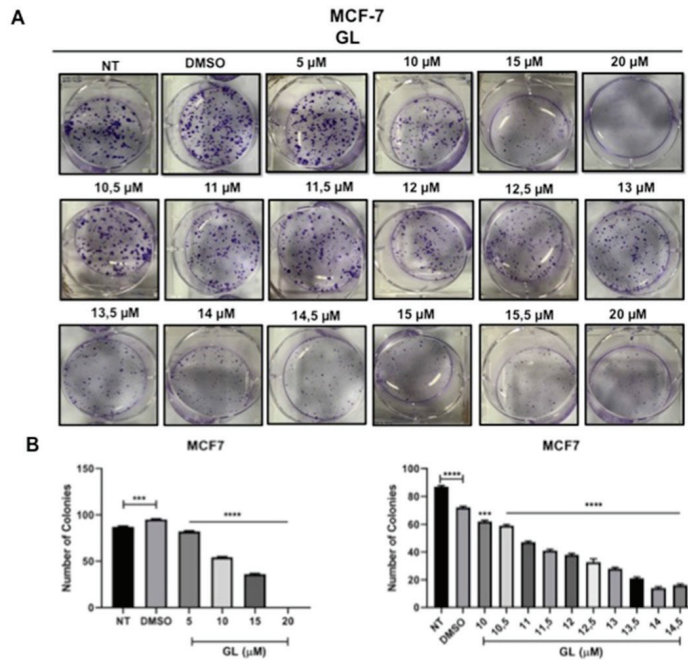


Fig. 3: Effect of GL on colony formation in MCF-7 cells. MCF-7 cells were assessed for colony formation by staining with crystal violet and colony areas were counted with image J at the end of 14 days in MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7. Data are presented as mean \pm SD (** $p < 0.001$, **** $p < 0.0001$).

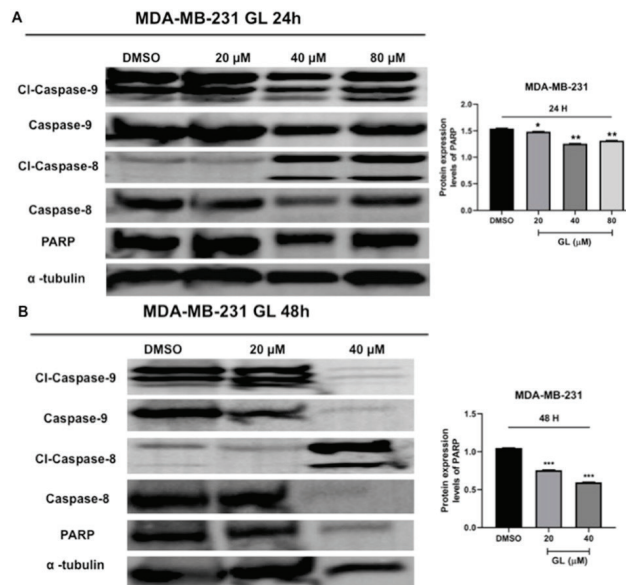


Fig. 4: Effects of GL on apoptosis in MDA-MB-231 cells. MDA-MB-231 cells were cultured with different concentrations of GL for 24 and 48h and Western blot assays were carried out to examine the effects of GL on the expression of apoptosis pathway markers in MDA-MB-231 cells after 24 (A) and 48 h (B) of GL treatment. Protein α -tubulin was used as internal control. Measurements were repeated 3 times independently of each other. The data are presented as mean \pm SD (* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$).

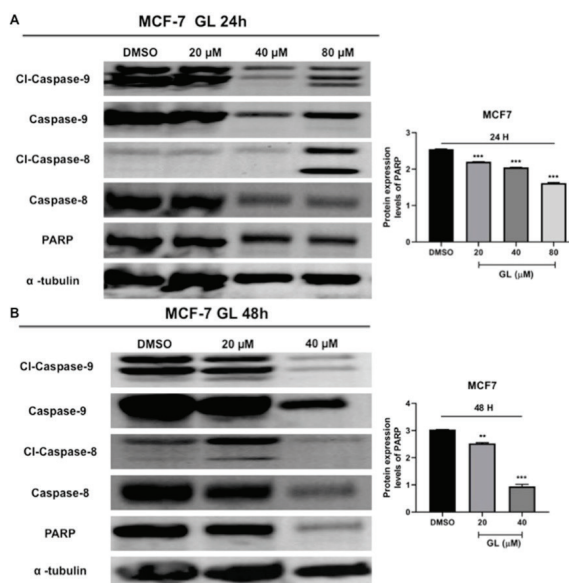


Fig. 5: Effects of GL on apoptosis in MCF-7 cells. MCF-7 cells were cultured with different concentrations of GL for 24 and 48h and Western blot assays were carried out to examine the effects of GL on expression of apoptosis pathway markers in MCF-7 cells after 24 (A) and 48 h (B) of GL treatment. Protein α -tubulin was used as internal control. Measurements were repeated 3 times independently of each other. Data are presented as mean \pm SD (** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$).

cleaved-caspase 9 expression indicates that GL treatment activates the apoptosis pathway.

DISCUSSION

Chemotherapy remains an essential treatment for patients with breast cancer despite the side effects.²⁴ Cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment are more likely to get infections due to their weakened immune systems.²⁵ Chemotherapy can damage the immune system by reducing the amount of infection-fighting white blood cells and making the body more vulnerable. Therefore, patients often are not able to continue treatment because of the side effects of the drugs.²⁶ For this reason, natural product research has promise for discovering biologically active compounds from different sources such as fungi or plants with anti-cancer potential.²⁷

GL is a popular mushroom that is called the “Mushroom of Immortality” and has been known for more than 4000

years for health promotion. It has also been used to prevent or cure various diseases, including cancer, in traditional Chinese medicine.²⁸ Martinez-Montemayor and et al. showed that GL compounds had significant anti-cancer activity against triple-negative breast cancer models.²⁹ Similarly, in recent years, GL polysaccharides (GLP) extracted from GL were shown to inhibit cell proliferation, invasion, and metastasis, and induced tumor cell apoptosis and suppressed drug resistance in BC cells. Although the composition of GLP has not yet been fully identified, recent studies have found that GL contains more bioactive compounds than extracts of unbroken spores.^{16,30-32} Jiang and et al. showed that GL obstructed the proliferation of MCF-7 and MDA-MB-231 cells through regulation of the estrogen receptor (ER) and NF-kappaB signaling. In this study, while GL suppressed the expression of ER alpha in MCF-7 cells, it did not affect the expression of ER beta in MCF-7 and MDA-MB-231 cells. Overall, emerging data suggest that GL has estrogenic activity on breast cancer

cells.¹⁹ Similarly, Ye and et al. showed the binding ability of GL-1, a component of GL, to estrogen receptor by computer-aided simulation. The results showed that GL-1 could bind to estrogen receptor β , and had estrogen-like effects, which might induce secretion of estrogen and expression of ER β by binding to ERs. In this way, Ye et al. reported the effects of GL-1 on the proliferation of estrogen-induced MCF-7 cells.³³

Tumor metastasis is a multistep process with formation of new vessels (angiogenesis), tissue invasion, and formation of new colonies and is often responsible for major death in patients with cancer. Prevention of colony formation is an important part of the treatment process.^{34,35} Zhong et al. showed that GL reduces the number of colonies and prevents the formation of new colonies in MCF-7 cells.³⁵ Similarly, in this study, we showed that GL was effective on colony formation in MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 cells with crystal violet staining.

Wu and et al. noted that GL had anti-proliferative and apoptotic effects in BC cells by Hoechst staining, DNA fragment assay, and Western blot analysis. Additionally, in the same study, it was demonstrated by the Comet method that GL caused DNA damage to breast cancer cells.²⁰ It is clearly understood in the literature that GL has anti-proliferative, anti-tumorigenic, and apoptotic effects on BC cells. However, even if some authors indicate direct cytotoxicity of GL on cancer cells,^{30,36,37} the pathway mediating the anticancer functions of GL is not yet known. Therefore, in our study, we wanted to show that GL induces apoptotic pathways, both the mitochondrial intrinsic pathway via caspase 8 and the extrinsic pathway via caspase-9 in destroying breast cancer cells. Poly (ADP-ribose) polymerase (PARP) is a type of enzyme involved in many cellular processes including DNA repair, genomic stability, and programmed cell death.³⁸ In cancer treatment, blocking PARP can eliminate cancer cells by preventing them from repairing their damaged DNA, causing them to die.³⁹⁻⁴¹ Therefore, the agents that block PARP may be crucial for

cancer treatment. In our study, we noticed that GL significantly decreased the expression of PARP.

CONCLUSION

Our findings indicate that GL induced apoptotic cell death through activation of caspase-8, the initiator caspase of the intrinsic pathway, and caspase-9, the initiator caspase of the extrinsic pathway. Additionally, PARP, active in DNA repair, was significantly decreased in MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 cells with GL treatment. These results could suggest GL supplementation as a potential anti-cancer agent against BC cells. Moreover, it could be a guide for the discovery of new drugs to use instead of drugs with high side effects and may be promising for patients with BC.

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Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

Author Contributions

Concept and Design: Ö.G., B.Y Supervision: B.Y Materials: Ö.G., V.Ç., Z.H Data and Analysis: Ö.G., V.Ç., Z.H Writing: Ö.G Revision: Z.H., B.Y.

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Association of Diabetic Polyneuropathy and Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: Role of Glycemic Control and Microvascular Complications

Diyabetik Polinöropati ve Karpal Tünel Sendromu İlişkisi:
Glisemik Kontrol ve Mikrovasküler Komplikasyonların Rolü

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Abstract

Introduction	Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is more common in diabetes mellitus (DM), especially in individuals with diabetic polyneuropathy (DPN). This study aimed to retrospectively investigate the effects of elevated glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c) levels, duration of diabetes, and other microvascular complications of DM on the frequency and severity of CTS in patients with DPN.
Materials and Methods	124 DPN patients were included in the study. In these patients, fasting blood glucose (FBG) and HbA1c levels, duration of DM, antidiabetic drugs used, comorbidities, and other complications of diabetes were questioned. According to the results of the electrophysiological examination, the patients were divided into 2 groups: those with only DPN and those with DPN + CTS.
Results	When diabetes complications were investigated, diabetic nephropathy was found only in those with DPN + CTS (p=0.045). Electrophysiologically, in sensory fibers in all patients, In 43 patients (34.7%), involvement of motor fibers was accompanied. A positive correlation was found between the severity of CTS and duration of diabetes, FBG and HbA1c levels, and subcutaneous insulin use (p=0.018, p=0.014, p=0.003, p=0.029, respectively).
Conclusion	Good glycemic control can reduce the risk of developing CTS with microvascular complications of diabetes. Therefore, it is important for patients to protect their hand function and prevent the development of CTS by being informed about the complications of diabetes.
Keywords	Carpal tunnel syndrome, Diabetic polyneuropathy, HbA1c, Microvascular complications, Glycemic control.

Öz

Amaç	Karpal tünel sendromu (KTS) diyabet mellitusta (DM), özellikle de diyabetik polinöropatisi (DPN) olan bireylerde daha sık görülmektedir. Bu çalışmada, DPN'li hastalarda yüksek glükozile hemoglobin (HbA1c) düzeylerinin, diyabet süresinin ve DM'nin diğer mikrovasküler komplikasyonlarının KTS sıklığı ve şiddeti üzerindeki etkilerinin retrospektif olarak araştırılması amaçlanmıştır.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	124 DPN hastası çalışmaya dahil edildi. Bu hastalarda; açlık kan şekeri (AKŞ) ve HbA1c düzeyleri, DM süresi, kullanılan antidiyabetik ilaçlar, eşlik eden hastalıklar ve diyabetin diğer komplikasyonları sorgulandı. Elektrofizyolojik inceleme sonuçlarına göre hastalar sadece DPN olanlar ve DPN + KTS olanlar olmak üzere 2 gruba ayrıldı.
Bulgular	Diyabet komplikasyonları araştırıldığında, diyabetik nefropati sadece DPN + KTS olanlarda saptandı (p=0.045). Elektrofizyolojik olarak tüm hastalarda duyuusal liflerde; 43 hastada (%34,7) ise motor liflerde tutulum eşlik etti. KTS şiddeti ile diyabet süresi, AKŞ ve HbA1c düzeyleri ve subkutan insülin kullanımı arasında pozitif korelasyon bulundu (sırasıyla p=0.018, p=0.014, p=0.003, p=0.029).
Sonuç	İyi glisemik kontrol, diyabetin mikrovasküler komplikasyonları ile KTS gelişme riskini azaltabilir. Bu nedenle hastaların diyabetin komplikasyonları hakkında bilgi sahibi olarak el fonksiyonlarını korumaları ve KTS gelişimini önlemeleri önemlidir.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Karpal tünel sendromu, Diyabetik polinöropati, HbA1c, Mikrovasküler komplikasyonlar, Glisemik kontrol.



INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a metabolic disease with high morbidity. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the number of patients with diabetes is expected to reach 300 million in the first quarter of the 21st century.¹ According to the results of the Turkish Diabetes Epidemiology Study-II (TURDEP-II) conducted in 2010, the prevalence of diabetes in Turkey was 16.5% (6.5 million people).²

Complications caused by diabetes, a systemic disease, are categorized into microvascular and macrovascular. Microvascular complications include diabetic polyneuropathy (DPN), diabetic nephropathy, and diabetic retinopathy, while macrovascular complications include diabetic heart disease and stroke. DPN is the most common chronic complication of DM and occurs in approximately 50% of patients with diabetes for more than 20 years.³ Findings suggestive of polyneuropathy in patients include marked numbness, tingling, burning sensation, pain, itching, and hyperalgesia in the distal extremities.⁴ Diabetes causes increased inflammation in the nerve tissue and microvascular damage in the vasa nervorum, leading to nerve ischemia and subsequent neuropathy.⁵

Diabetes causes many different forms of involvement of peripheral nerves, most commonly distal symmetrical sensory neuropathy. Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is the most common entrapment neuropathy causing numbness, pain, and weakness in the hands,⁶ prevalence is higher in patients with DPN than in the general population.⁷ In one study, CTS was 2% in the reference population, 14% in diabetic individuals without DPN, and 30% in those with DPN.⁸

Elevated glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c), high body mass index (BMI), and long duration of diabetes are risk factors for the development of CTS and ulnar entrapment neuropathies and play an essential role in the development of entrapment neuropathy in the presence of diabetic

retinopathy.⁹

Considering the co-occurrence of DPN and CTS, the relationship between them, and their effects on quality of life, further investigation of how these two diseases affect each other's severity may be helpful in the treatment of patients. The primary aim of this study was to investigate the effect of elevated HbA1c levels on the development and severity of CTS in patients with DPN. The secondary aim was to examine the effect of diabetes duration, BMI, and other microvascular complications of DM on the frequency and severity of CTS.

MATERIAL and METHODS

In this study, we retrospectively reviewed the clinical and laboratory findings of 2921 patients who were referred for electromyography (EMG) examination to the Clinical Electroneurophysiology Laboratory, Neurology Clinic, Başakşehir Çam and Sakura City Hospital with a prediagnosis of polyneuropathy between May 2022 and April 2023 from the hospital data system. According to the results of the EMG examination, a total of 143 diabetic patients with polyneuropathy only and CTS with polyneuropathy were identified. Fasting blood glucose (FBG) and HbA1c levels in the last 60 days, duration of DM, antidiabetic drugs used, comorbidities, and other complications of diabetes were questioned. We excluded nine patients whose hospital data were unavailable, three with chemotherapeutic drug use, and seven whose HbA1c levels had not been checked in the last 60 days. The study's local ethics committee approval was obtained (2023- 175).

A 4-channel EMG device (Natus UltraPro S100 EMG/NCS/EP Neurodiagnostic System, Galway, Ireland) was used for all subjects' electrophysiologic EP examinations. Care was taken to ensure limb temperatures were around 32-34 °C. In each patient, median, ulnar, radial, superficial peroneal, sural sensory, median, ulnar, tibial, and peroneal motor nerve conduction studies were performed on the side with more symptoms. Sensory and motor nerve con-

duction studies were also performed in the opposite extremity in patients with entrapment neuropathy. In sensory nerve conduction studies (NCSs), sensory conduction velocity (SCV), sensory nerve action potentials (SNAPs), peak latency, and peak-to-peak amplitude were measured. In motor NCSs, compound muscle action potentials (CMAPs), distal motor latency (DML), basal-negative peak amplitude, and motor conduction velocity (MCV) were calculated. For the diagnosis of CTS, median nerve SCV ≤ 50 m/s and median nerve DML duration ≥ 4.2 ms were considered abnormal. When standard tests yielded the expected results, a median-ulnar comparison was performed for the fourth finger, and the difference between the median and ulnar SNAP peak latency of the fourth finger was calculated. A difference greater than 0.4 ms was considered abnormal. The electrophysiologic severity of CTS was determined according to Padua et al.'s neurophysiologic grading system: extreme severe CTS, loss of motor and sensory response; severe CTS, loss of median SNAP and prolonged DML; moderate CTS, slowing of median SCV and prolonged DML; mild CTS, slowing of median SCV and normal DML; very mild CTS, normal with standardized tests but impaired in comparative or segmental stimulation tests; negative, all tests including comparative or segmental stimulation tests were regular.¹⁰ According to the results of the electrophysiologic examination, the patients were divided into two groups: DPN only and DPN + CTS.

Statistical Analysis

For statistical analysis, the distribution of parametric data in the groups was analyzed by the Shapiro-Wilks test. For comparison between groups, parametric (T-test) tests were used for numerical data with normal distribution, and nonparametric (Mann-Whitney U) tests were used for numerical data without normal distribution. Groups were compared with a chi-square test for non-numerical data. IBM SPSS-25 program was used for statistical analysis. The statistical significance level was accepted as $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

A total of 124 patients were included in the study. There were 21 (8 females) patients with DPN only with a mean age of 60.0 ± 7.7 years, and 103 (52 females) patients with DPN + CTS with a mean age of 63.03 ± 11.4 years. There was no difference in gender distribution between the groups. Although the mean age of patients with DPN + CTS was slightly higher than those with DPN alone, there was no significant difference between the groups ($p=0.150$). The two groups' mean height, weight, and BMI were similar. There was no difference between the groups regarding the frequency of concomitant hyperlipidemia, hypertension, and thyroid dysfunction (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic data and comorbidities of the groups

	DPN	DPN +CTS	Total	p
	n=21	n=103	n=124	
Female: Male	8:13	52:51	60:64	0.308
Age (years)	60.0 ± 7.7 (44-75)	63.03 ± 11.4 (36-87)	62.5 ± 10.9 (36-87)	0.150
Height (cm)	169.4 ± 10.6 (150-186)	166.3 ± 10.4 (140-193)	166.8 ± 10.5 (140-193)	0.227
Weight (kg)	84.2 ± 12.8 (65-113)	82.2 ± 16.7 (44-134)	82.6 ± 16.1 (44-134)	0.602
BMI (kg/m ²)	29.5 ± 4.8 (20-38)	29.8 ± 5.9 (17-54)	29.7 ± 5.7 (17-54)	0.839
Thyroid dysfunction	5 (%23.8)	18 (%17.5)	23	0.496
Hypertension	17 (%81)	77 (%74.8)	94	0.546
Hyperlipidemia	9 (% 42.9)	55 (%53.4)	64	0.378
Parametric values are mean \pm standard deviation (minimum-maximum), and categorical variables are given as numbers (percentage). DPN: diabetic polyneuropathy, CTS: carpal tunnel syndrome, BMI: body mass index.				

Although FBG and HbA1c values were higher in patients with DPN + CTS, there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups ($p=0.166$, $p=0.262$, respectively). Duration of diabetes was longer in patients with DPN + CTS, but there was no significant difference between the two groups ($p=0.199$). Eighty-four patients were using oral antidiabetics, and 75 patients were using

subcutaneous insulin, and there was no difference between the groups in terms of treatment. When diabetic complications were investigated, diabetic nephropathy was found only in patients with DPN + CTS (17 patients, 16.5%). There was no significant difference between the groups in the incidence of diabetic retinopathy and diabetic foot (Table 2).

Table 2. Diabetes characteristics of the groups

	DPN n=21	DPN +CTS n=103	Total n=124	p
Fasting blood glucose (mg/dL)	178 ± 64.7 (104-312)	209.3 ± 96.8 (80-625)	204.1 ± 92.6 (80-625)	0.166
HbA1c (%)	8 ± 1.6 (5.5-11.9)	8.6 ± 2.3 (5.1-15.8)	8.5 ± 2.2 (5.1-15.8)	0.262
Duration of Diabetes (years)	12.8 ± 8.8 (2-30)	15.5 ± 8.8 (0.5-50)	15.1 ± 8.8 (0.5-50)	0.199
Diabetic retinopathy	4 (%19)	30 (%29,1)	34	0.345
Diabetic nephropathy	0	17 (%16.5)	17	0.045*
Diabetic foot	3 (%14.3)	19 (18.4)	22	0.649

Parametric values are mean, standard deviation (minimum-maximum), and categorical variables as numbers (percentage). DPN: diabetic polyneuropathy, CTS: carpal tunnel syndrome, HbA1c: glycosylated hemoglobin.
 *P < 0.05.

Electrophysiologically, sensory fibers were involved in all patients, and motor fibers were involved in 34.7% (43 patients). There was no significant difference in motor fiber involvement between the two groups. When the degree of CTS was classified as EP, moderate severity of CTS was found for both the right and left sides: 40 patients (38.8%) in the right hand and 48 patients (46.6%) in the left hand (Figure 1). There was a positive correlation between the severity of CTS and duration of diabetes, FBG and HbA1c levels, and subcutaneous insulin use (Table 3).

Table 3. Significant correlates associated with carpal tunnel syndrome

CTS severity	Correlation	Spearman rho / p
	Fasting blood glucose	0.150 / 0.018*
	HbA1c	0.155 / 0.014*
	Duration of diabetes	0.187 / 0.003**
	Subcutaneous insulin use	0.139 / 0.029*

CTS: carpal tunnel syndrome, HbA1c: glycosylated hemoglobin.
 *P < 0.05, **P < 0.01.

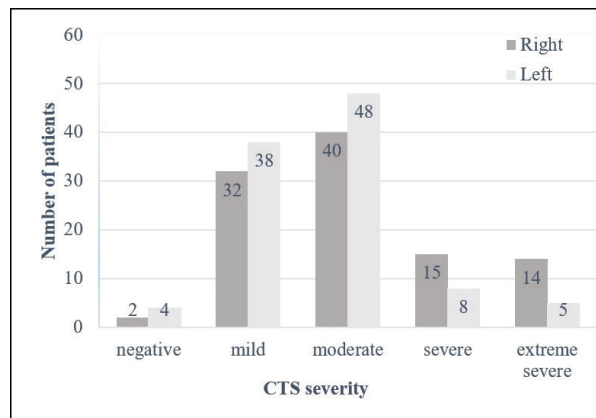


Figure 1. Distribution of electrophysiologic severity of CTS in diabetic polyneuropathy group with carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS).

DISCUSSION

It is known that the prevalence of CTS in patients with diabetic polyneuropathy is higher than in the general population. In 2020, a nationwide population-based study showed that DM patients with DPN were more prone to CTS than those without DPN.¹¹ In another study of 353 Type 2 DM patients, DPN was detected in 235 patients and CTS in 139 of them, with a prevalence of 39.3%.¹² This study found CTS of varying severity in 83% of patients with DPN as EP. The pathogenesis of CTS in diabetic patients has not been fully explained. Metabolic and vascular factors may be influential. Studies have shown that glycemic control and aldose reductase inhibitor treatment improve nerve conduction velocities in patients with CTS.^{13,14} In other words, the mechanism of CTS in diabetic patients is thought to

originate from metabolic factors related to hyperglycemia. The reason why the frequency of CTS was found to be higher in our group compared to previous studies may be related to the fact that FBG and HbA1c values were higher and, therefore, glycemic control was worse.

Duration of diabetes is an essential factor in developing peripheral neuropathy and CTS.¹⁵ The duration of diabetes in our study group ranged between 6 months and 50 years after the diagnosis of diabetes. Although the duration of diabetes diagnosis was longer in the group with CTS (15.5 years versus 12.8 years), no significant difference was found between the two groups. Again, although age and BMI were slightly higher in the group with CTS, no significant difference was found. The influence of other factors, such as occupation and duration of hand use, on the development of CTS may explain this.

Glycosylated hemoglobin level is accepted as the gold standard in evaluating long-term glycemic control in diabetic patients. It is a good indicator of blood glucose control in the last 2-3 months.¹⁶ It has been shown that elevated HbA1c level increases the risk of complications such as DPN and diabetic retinopathy, and lowering HbA1c level decreases the risk.⁵ Microvascular complications of diabetes mellitus occurred quite frequently in the patients in our study group. Uremia is a risk factor for both polyneuropathy and CTS.¹⁷ In our study, diabetic nephropathy was observed only in DPN patients with CTS.

It is reported that type 2 DM patients are frequently diagnosed with metabolic syndrome, a potential risk factor in the pathogenesis of CTS. In these patients, median CMAP amplitudes were found to be lower and sensory thresholds were found to be increased.¹⁸ In a study by Nazish et al., it was shown that age, BMI, systolic blood pressure, low serum HDL, high triglycerides, high FBG, and HbA1c levels were parameters that may affect the electrophysiologic severity of CTS in diabetic patients.¹⁹ Our study found a positive correlation between the severity of

CTS and duration of diabetes, FBG and HbA1c levels, and subcutaneous insulin use.

The limitations of our study are that it is a retrospective, single-center study with a small sample size.

CONCLUSION

We found a strong association between CTS and diabetic nephropathy in our study; poor glycemic control increased the severity of CTS. The occurrence of polyneuropathy and CTS in diabetes, a multisystemic disease, increases disability and impairs quality of life. Reasonable glycemic control in diabetic patients will reduce the risk of developing CTS and microvascular complications of diabetes. Patients must be informed about the complications of diabetes and the prevention of CTS development by preserving hand function.

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Piroglutamil Peptidlerin Farelerde Skopolaminle Oluşturulmuş Öğrenme-Bellek Bozukluğu Üzerine Etkisi

Effects Of Pyroglutamyl Peptides on Scopolamine Induced Learning-Memory Impairment in Mice

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Öz

Amaç	Adipokinetik hormon böceklerin şeker ve lipid mobilizasyonunda rol oynar. Adipokinetik hormonun sıçan şizofreni ve olfaktör bulbektomi modelinde öğrenme-bellek üzerine düzeltici etkileri görülmüştür. Adipokinetik hormonun sıçanlara intraperitoneal uygulanmasından sonra piroglutamil peptidleri içeren adipokinetik hormon metabolitlerinin kan-beyin bariyerini geçtiği hipotez edilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın amacı piroglutamil peptidlerin hem naif farelerde öğrenme-bellek üzerine etkisini hem de skopolaminle indüklenen bellek bozukluğu üzerine etkisini incelemektir.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Bu çalışmada öğrenme-bellek fonksiyonlarını incelemek için modifiye yükseltilmiş artı labirent testi (mYAL) ve pasif sakinme testlerini kullandık. Skopolamin (1 mg/kg) ile piroglutamil peptid olarak piroglutamik asid-valin (pGlu-Val; 10 ve 20 mg/kg), piroglutamik asid-lösin (pGlu-Leu; 10 ve 20 mg/kg) kullandık.
Bulgular	mYAL testinde dipeptidlerin naif farelerde geçiş süresi-2 üzerine anlamlı etkisi yoktu. Skopolamin kısmi olarak ikinci denemede geçiş süresi-2'yi arttırdı, bu etki pGlu-Leu (10 ve 20 mg/kg; p=0,0064; p=0,0055 sırasıyla) tarafından anlamlı şekilde tersine çevrildi fakat pGlu-Val etkisizdi. Pasif sakinme testinde dipeptidlerin naif farelerde retansiyon latansı üzerine anlamlı etkisi yoktu. Skopolamin kontrol grubuna göre retansiyon latansını kısmen azaltırken dipeptidlerin hiçbirisi skopolamin grubunun retansiyon latansını tersine çevirmedi.
Sonuç	Sonuçta, piroglutamil peptidler naif farelerde öğrenme-bellek üzerine etki göstermedi. pGlu-Leu mYAL testinde skopolaminle indüklenen öğrenme bozukluğu üzerine düzeltici etki gösterirken, her iki peptid pasif sakinme testinde skopolaminle indüklenen bellek bozukluğu üzerine etki göstermedi.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Fare; Modifiye yükseltilmiş artı labirent; Öğrenme-bellek; Pasif sakinme; Piroglutamil peptidler

Abstract

Introduction	Adipokinetik hormone plays role in sugar and lipid mobilization of insects. Adipokinetik hormone exerted improving effects on learning and memory in schizophrenia and olfactory bulbectomy model of rats. It is hypothesized that metabolites of adipokinetik hormone, including pyroglutamyl peptides, pass the blood-brain barrier after the intraperitoneal administration of adipokinetik hormone to rats. The aim of this study is to investigate effects of pyroglutamyl peptides on learning and memory both in naive mice and in scopolamine-induced memory deterioration.
Materials and Methods	In this study, we used modified elevated plus maze (mEPM) and passive avoidance tests to examine learning and memory functions. We used scopolamine (1 mg/kg) and pyroglutamic acid-valine (pGlu-Val; 10 and 20 mg/kg), pyroglutamic acid-leucine (pGlu-Leu; 10 and 20 mg/kg) as pyroglutamyl peptides.
Results	In mEPM test there was no significant effect of dipeptides on transfer latency-2 in naive mice. Scopolamine partially increased transfer latency-2 in second trial and this effect was significantly reversed by pGlu-Leu (10 ve 20 mg/kg; p=0,0064; p=0,0055 respectively) although pGlu-Val had no effect. In passive avoidance test none of the dipeptides reversed retention latency of scopolamine group.
Conclusion	We found that pyroglutamyl peptides had no effect on learning and memory in naive mice. pGlu-Leu had improving effect on scopolamine induced learning impairment in the mEPM test while both of the peptides had no effect on scopolamine induced memory impairment in the passive avoidance test.
Keywords	Learning-memory; Mice; Modified elevated plus maze; Passive avoidance; Pyroglutamyl peptides



GİRİŞ

Böcek adipokinetik hormonları uçuş ve hareket gibi enerji gerektiren aktivitelerde böcek yağ dokusundan şeker ve lipid'in mobilizasyonundan sorumludurlar.¹ Deney hayvanlarına intraperitoneal olarak uygulanan adipokinetik hormonun beyne piroglutamik asitle başlayan 2 aminoasid uzunluğunda metabolitleri geçmektedir. L-piroglutamik asitle başlayan peptidlerin (piroglutamik peptidler) farelerde daha önce yapılan çalışmalarda antidepresan-benzeri etkileri gösterilmiştir.² Adipokinetik hormonun depresyon ve bellek üzerine etkilerinden piroglutamik asitle başlayan 2 aminoasid uzunluğundaki metabolitlerinin (pGlu-Val, pGlu-Leu) sorumlu olduğu belirlenmiştir. Daha önce yapılan çalışmalarda L-piroglutamik asid (p-Glu)'in beyinde hem glutamata dönüştüğü hem de glutamatın etkilerini antagonize ettiği görülmüştür.³ Yine yapılan çalışmalarda piroglutamik asidin skopolaminle oluşturulmuş bellek bozukluğunu tersine çevirdiği ve kolinerjik aktiviteyi artırdığı görülmüştür.^{4,5} Piroglutamik asidin insan ve hayvanlarda yapılan çalışmalarda yaşa bağlı oluşan bellek bozuklukları üzerine de olumlu etkileri gösterilmiştir.^{6,7}

Kolinerjik nöronlar ve projeksiyonları santral sinir sisteminde öğrenme, bellek, hareketin kortikal organizasyonu ve serebral kan akımı kontrolü gibi birçok yaşamsal fonksiyonun düzenlenmesinde önemli rol oynar.⁸ Asetilkolin esteraz kolinerjik fonksiyonda önemli rol oynayan bir enzimdir.⁹ Bu enzim nörotransmitter asetilkolini kolinerjik sinapsların ve nöromuskuler bağlantıların sinaptik yarığında hidrolize eder¹⁰ ve asetilkolinin etkisini ortadan kaldırır. Asetilkolin esteraz yine, inme¹¹, Alzheimer hastalığı¹² ve diabetes mellitus'a bağlı demans¹³ gibi birçok santral sinir sistemi bozukluğuyla ilişkilidir. Asetilkolinin etkisini ortadan kaldıran, kolinerjik sistemin inhibisyonunda yaygın olarak kullanılan ve farmakolojik olarak öğrenme-bellek bozukluğu oluşturan ilaç skopolamindir.¹⁴

Bu çalışmada daha önce yapılan çalışmalarda depresyon, anksiyete, stres bozuklukları^{15,16} ve yine şizofreni ve depresyon modellerinde bozulmuş bellek üzerinde etkin-

liği^{17,18} gösterilen adipokinetik hormonun etkin metabolitleri olarak görülen piroglutamik peptidlerin hem naif farelerde öğrenme-bellek üzerine etkisi hem de skopolaminle oluşturulmuş öğrenme-bellek bozukluğu üzerine etkilerinin modifiye yükseltilmiş artı labirent testi ve pasif sakınma testleri kullanılarak incelenmesi planlanmıştır.

GEREÇ VE YÖNTEMLER

Etik Komite Onayı

Bu araştırma protokolü Avrupa Topluluğu Konseyinin hayvan deneyleri etik kurallarına uymakta olup etik onay Kocaeli Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi etik kurulu (KOÜ HAD-YEK 8/1-2020 sayılı karar ile) tarafından alınmıştır.

Deney Hayvanları

Çalışmada 20-30g ağırlığında her grupta 8 adet olmak üzere 7-8 haftalık balb-c erkek fare (Sakarya Üniversitesi Deneysel Tıp Araştırma Enstitüsü Deney Hayvanları Birimi-Sakarya) kullanılmıştır. Deney öncesi Kocaeli Üniversitesi Deneysel Araştırma Birimi Laboratuvarı fare bakım odalarında fareler $21 \pm 1,5^\circ\text{C}$ oda sıcaklığında ve 12 saat aydınlık- 12 saat karanlık (aydınlık saat 20.00 'de) olacak şekilde ayarlanan ortamda tutulmuşlardır. Farelere yem olarak standart yem, içecek olarak musluk suyu verilmiştir. Farelerin yeni ortama uyum sağlamaları amacıyla fareler laboratuara geldikten iki hafta sonra deneye alınmış ve deneylerin 08:30-14:00 saatleri arasında yapılmasına özen gösterilmiştir.

Deneyler

Modifiye Yükseltilmiş Artı Labirent Testi (mYALT)

Öğrenme-bellek ile ilişkili davranış modifiye yükseltilmiş artı-labirent testi ile ölçülür. Deneyler hafif aydınlık, yarı ses-geçirgen, masa lambası ile aydınlatılmış (80 lux) odada yapılır. Labirent tahtadan yapılmıştır ve iki açık (29 cm uzunluk x 5 cm genişlik) ve iki kapalı kolları (29 cm x 5 cm x 15 cm yükseklikte duvarları olan) birbirlerini çaprazlarlar ve 5cm'lik kare şeklinde merkez kısmı oluştururlar. Hayvanın düşmesini engellemek için açık alanlar kısa (1cm)'lik bir pleksiglas kenarlıkla çevrelenmiştir. Labirent

yerden 40 cm yüksekliktedir.

Modifiye yükseltilmiş artı labirent testi öğrenme ve bellek deneyleri için kullanıldığında deney iki aşamalı olarak yapılır. Birinci aşama, kazanım/öğrenim (acquisition) periyodudur. İkinci aşama ise bir gün önce kazanım/öğrenme periodunda, öğrenilen ve depolandığı düşünülen bilginin, 24 saat sonra anımsanacağı varsayılan retansiyon periyodudur (retention period). Birinci gün denekler yükseltilmiş artı labirentin açık kollarından birinin ucuna konulur. 90 sn içinde kapalı kollardan birine girmeyen farelerin, hafifçe itilerek kapalı kollardan birine girmesi sağlanır. Farelerin karanlık kollardan birine girmesi için geçen süre kaydedilir (GS1). Karanlık bölüme geçen farelerin bu kollarda 10 sn vakit geçirmeleri sağlanıp, bu süre sonunda fareler kafeslerine geri konulur. Bu uygulamadan tam 24 saat sonra fareler tekrar açık kollardan birinin ucuna konulur ve karanlık kollardan birine girmesi için geçen süre kaydedilir (GS2). Bu testte GS2 değerinin GS1 değerinden düşük olması deneklerin öğrendiğinin bir kanıtı olarak kabul edilmektedir.¹⁹

Pasif Sakınma (PS) Testi

Pasif sakınma testinde; pasif sakınma deney aleti (Ugo Basile, Passive Avoidance Controller Cat 7551, İtalya) kullanılmıştır. Pasif sakınma genellikle en hızlı öğrenme testlerinden biri olup Monleon ve arkadaşlarının metoduna²⁰ göre yapılmıştır. Bu test, birbirinden bir geçiş kapısı ile ayrılmış, biri karanlık (24x12.5x14 cm), diğeri aydınlık (7x12.5x14 cm) (2000 lux) olan iki bölmeden oluşmaktadır. Farelerin bölme içinde ayak bastıkları zemin 0,3 cm çapında paslanmaz çelik telden yapılmış ve birbirine 0,9 cm aralıklarla paralel olarak yerleştirilmiş ızgara yapısındadır. Zemin deney hayvanlarının ayağına programlı bir elektrik şoku verilebilecek şekilde ayarlanmıştır. Hayvanın elektrik şoku aldığı bölme karanlık olan bölgedir. Normalde farelerin aydınlık bölmeye konduktan sonra kısa süre içinde tercih edilen karanlık bölmeye geçmesi beklenir.

İnhibitör sakınma testi 2 aşamadan oluşur: kazanım (acqui-

sition) denemesi ve hatırlama (retention) denemesi. Kazanım denemesinde, fare ızgara zeminden verilen ayak şokundan sakınmayı öğrenmek için eğitilir. Deneyin 1. günü (kazanım denemesi) fare aydınlık bölmeye yerleştirilir ve bölmeler arasındaki kapı 10 saniye sonra açılır. Fare aydınlık bölmeden karanlık bölmeye geçtiğinde (kuyruğun 2/3'ü karanlık bölmeye girmeli), kapı kapatılır ve karanlık kompartmanın ızgara zemininden hayvanın ayağına elektrik şoku (0.25mA/1 saniye) verilir. Farelerin karanlık bölmeye geçmesi için geçen süre kaydedilir. Ayak şokunu aldıktan 30 saniye sonra, hayvanlar karanlık bölmeden alınır ve kafeslerine geri konulur. Karanlık bölmeye 300 saniye içinde geçmeyen fareler deneyden çıkarılır. Her eğitim denemesinden sonra, bölmeler temizlenerek kokuya bağlı olumsuz etkiler önlenir. Hatırlama denemesi, kazanım denemesinden 24 saat sonra yapılır. Fare eğitim denemesinde olduğu gibi aydınlık bölmeye yerleştirilir. Bölmeler arası kapı 10 saniye'lik alıştırmaya periyodundan sonra açılır. Hayvan elektrik şoku alacağını anlayarak normalde tercih ettiği karanlık bölmeye 300 saniye içinde geçmezse olayı öğrenmiş kabul edilir.

Hatırlama denemesinde karanlık bölmeye geçme süresi "hatırlama süresi indeksi" olarak kullanılır. Hatırlama denemesinde farelere ayak şoku uygulanmaz. Hatırlama süresi indeksi arttıkça öğrenilmiş deneyim daha iyi hatırlanır.

Açık Alan Testi

Farede lokomotor aktivite açık alan testi²¹ kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu testte kullanılan cihaz 40 cm çapında ve 30 cm yüksekliğinde, PVC'den yapılmış dairesel açık bir alan olup, duvarlarından birine siyah- beyaz çizgili (30x20 cm) bir plaka yerleştirilmiştir. Zemin, biri merkezi olmak üzere, yedi eşit parçaya ayrılmış ve 100 lux şiddetinde sabit bir ışık ile aydınlatılmıştır.

Deneyler ses-izolasyonlu bir odada yapılmıştır. Açık alan testinde hayvanların lokomasyonu 5 dakika boyunca hayvanların zemindeki 7 eşit bölgenin birinden diğerine geçiş

sayısı kaydedilerek değerlendirilmiştir. Lokomasyon artışı toplam geçiş sayısında artış olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Açık alan testinde hayvanların anksiyetesi 5 dakika boyunca hayvanların orta zonda harcadığı zaman kaydedilerek değerlendirilmiştir. Anksiyolitik etki orta zonda harcanan toplam zamanda artış olarak değerlendirilmiştir.

Deney Planı ve İlaçlar

Modifiye yükseltilmiş artı labirent testi ve pasif sakinme testi öğrenme ve belleği değerlendirmek amacıyla, açık alan testi de lokomasyon ve anksiyeteyi değerlendirmek amacıyla uygulanmıştır. Tüm ilaçlar intraperitoneal (i.p.) olarak verilmiştir. mYAL testinde peptidler ve skopolamin akut olarak testin ilk gün denemesinden 30 dakika önce uygulanarak ilaçların öğrenme üzerine etkisine bakılmıştır. Pasif sakinme testinde peptidler ve skopolamin akut olarak testin ikinci gün denemesinden 30 dakika önce uygulanarak ilaçların bellek üzerine etkisine bakılmıştır. Açık alan testinde peptidler ve skopolamin akut olarak testten 30 dakika önce uygulanarak ilaçların lokomasyon ve anksiyete üzerine etkisine bakılmıştır. Deneylerde skopolamin (Sigma; St. Louis, USA), piroglutamik asit-valin (pGlu-Val) ve piroglutamik asit-lösin (pGlu-Leu) kullanılmıştır. Piroglutamil peptidler UCT Prag kimya departmanında sentezlenmiştir ve hediye olarak verilmiştir. Skopolamin ve peptidler %5 DMSO eklenmiş %0,9'luk serum fizyolojik içinde çözündürülerek deney sabahı taze olarak hazırlanmış ve intraperitoneal (i.p.) olarak 10g'lık ağırlık başına 0.1 ml olacak şekilde verilmiştir. İlaç dozları, davranış ve nörokimyasal çalışmalarda kullanılan dozlara göre belirlenmiştir.^{2,22} Deney gruplarındaki hayvan sayısı 8 olarak belirlenmiştir. Deneyde 10 adet grup bulunmaktadır. Bunlar kontrol grubu (%0,9 NaCl+ %5 DMSO), pGlu-Val 10 mg/kg, pGlu-Val 20 mg/kg, pGlu-Leu 10 mg/kg, pGlu-Leu 20 mg/kg, Skopolamin 1 mg/kg, Skopolamin 1+pGlu-Val 10 mg/kg, Skopolamin 1+pGlu-Val 20 mg/kg, Skopolamin 1+pGlu-Leu 10 mg/kg, Skopolamin 1+pGlu-Leu 20 mg/kg'dır.

İstatistiksel Analiz

Sonuçların değerlendirilmesinde tek-yönlü varyans analizi (ANOVA) post-hoc Tukey's testi uygulanmıştır. Değerler ortalama standart hata (ort.±SH) olarak verilmiştir. F değeri serbestlik derecesini (degrees of freedom) ifade etmektedir. $p < 0,05$ istatistiksel olarak anlamlı kabul edilmiştir. Verilerin analizinde GraphPad Prism 5 istatistik analiz programı kullanılmıştır.

BULGULAR

Piroglutamil Peptidlerin mYALT'nde Etkileri

mYALT'nde grupların 1. gün geçiş süresi (GS-1) değerlendirildiğinde gruplar arasında anlamlı farklılık yoktu [$F(9,70)=0.78$; $p=0.63$]. mYALT'nde grupların 2. gün geçiş süresi (GS-2) değerlendirildiğinde gruplar arasında anlamlı farklılık vardı [$F(9,70)=3.07$; $p=0.0037$; şekil 1]. mYAL testinde dipeptidlerin naif farelerde geçiş süresi-2 üzerine anlamlı etkisi yoktu. Skopolamin kısmi olarak ikinci denemede geçiş süresi-2'yi artırırken, bu etki pGlu-Leu (10 ve 20 mg/kg; $p=0,0064$; $p=0,0055$ sırasıyla) tarafından anlamlı şekilde tersine çevrildi. pGlu-Val (10 ve 20 mg/kg) kısmi olarak skopolaminin etkisini tersine çevirirken sonuç anlamlı değildi (şekil 1).

Piroglutamil Peptidlerin

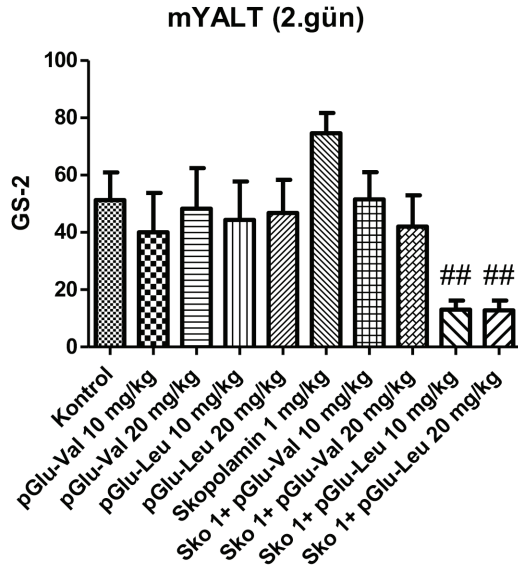
Pasif Sakınma Testinde Etkileri

Pasif sakinme testinde grupların 1. gün latansı değerlendirildiğinde gruplar arasında anlamlı farklılık yoktu [$F(9,70)=0,80$; $p=0,60$]. Pasif sakinme testinde grupların 2. gün geçiş süresi (retansiyon latansı) değerlendirildiğinde gruplar arasında yine anlamlı farklılık yoktu [$F(9,70)=1,06$; $p=0,40$; şekil 2]. Pasif sakinme testinde dipeptidlerin naif farelerde retansiyon latansı üzerine anlamlı etkisi yoktu. Skopolamin kontrol grubuna göre retansiyon latansını kısmen azaltırken dipeptidlerin hiçbirisi skopolamin grubunun retansiyon latansını anlamlı olarak tersine çevirmedi (şekil 2).

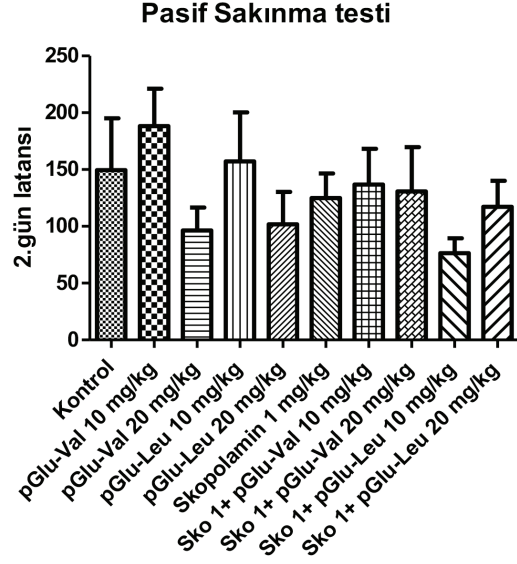
Piroglutamil Peptidlerin Açık Alan Testinde Etkileri

Açık alan testinde orta alanda harcanan zaman değer-

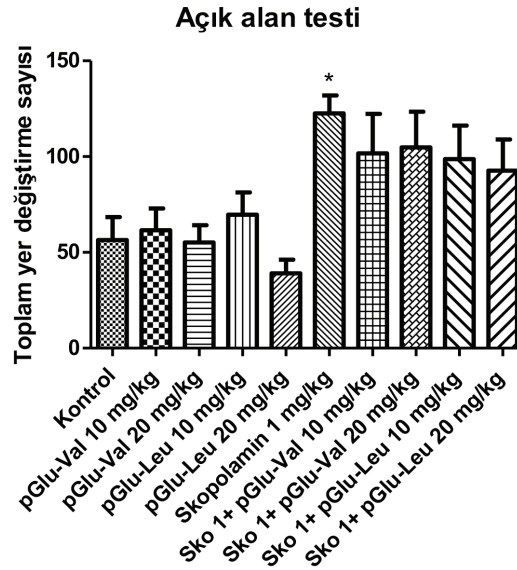
lendirildiğinde gruplar arasında anlamlı farklılık yoktu [$F(9,70)=1,43$; $p=0,18$]. Açık alan testinde, ilaçların hiç-biri kontrolle karşılaştırıldığında merkez zonda harcanan zamanı değiştirmede. Açık alan testinde toplam yer değiştirme sayısı değerlendirildiğinde gruplar arasında anlamlı farklılık vardı [$F(9,70)=3,74$; $p=0,0007$; şekil 3]. Skopolamin açık alan testinde kontrol grubu ile karşılaştırıldığında toplam yer değiştirme sayısını anlamlı olarak artırırken ($p=0,02$) bu etki pGlu-Val ve pGlu-Leu tarafından kısmen azaltıldı ancak anlamlı değildi (şekil 3).



Şekil 1 Modifiye yükseltilmiş artı labirent testinde ilaçların 2. gün geçiş latansı (GS-2) üzerine etkileri ($n=8$). İlaçlar 1. gün denemesinden 30 dakika önce uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar ort. \pm SH olarak bildirilmiştir. ## $p=0,0064$; $p=0,0055$ sırasıyla skopolamin (1 mg/kg) grubu ile karşılaştırıldığında.



Şekil 2 Pasif sakınma testinde ilaçların 2. gün latansı (retansiyon) üzerine etkileri ($n=8$). İlaçlar 2. gün denemesinden 30 dakika önce uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar ort. \pm SH olarak bildirilmiştir.



Şekil 3. Açık alan testinde ilaçların toplam yer değiştirme sayısı üzerine etkileri ($n=8$). İlaçlar açık alan testinden 30 dakika önce uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar ort. \pm SH olarak bildirilmiştir. * $p=0,02$ kontrol grubu ile karşılaştırıldığında.

TARTIŞMA

Böcek adipokinetik hormonu şeker ve lipid mobilizasyonunda rol oynar ve böceklerin uçuş ve hareketinde gerekli enerji üretimini sağlar. Önceki çalışmalarda adipokinetik hormonun antidepresan, anksiyolitik ve analjezik etkileri farelerde gösterilmiş, yine adipokinetik hormon farelerde nörotrofik faktörleri ve nörojenezi artırmış ve sıçan olfaktör bulbektomi, posttravmatik stres ve şizofreni modellerinde olumlu etkiler göstermiştir. Önceki çalışmalarda, piroglutamik asid ve piroglutamik peptidleri de içeren adipokinetik hormonun metabolitlerinin adipokinetik hormonun sıçanlara intraperitoneal uygulanmasından sonra kan-beyin bariyerini geçtiği diğer çalışmalar tarafından da desteklendiği şekilde hipotez edilmiştir. Bu çalışmamızda iki piroglutamik peptidin hem naif farelerde hem de skopolamin uygulanmış farelerde öğrenme-bellek ve lokomasyon üzerine etkisini inceledik. Daha önceki çalışmalarda kullanılan adipokinetik hormonların başlangıç sekansına sahip iki dipeptid olan, piroglutamik asid-valin (pGlu-Val) ve piroglutamik asid-lösin (pGlu-Leu) kullandık.¹⁵⁻¹⁸ Modifiye yükseltilmiş artı labirent testi, pasif sakınma testi ve açık alan testlerini kullandık. pGlu-Val (10 ve 20 mg/kg) ve pGlu-Leu (10 ve 20 mg/kg)'ı piroglutamik peptidler olarak kullandık. mYAL ve pasif sakınma testlerinde naif farelerde dipeptidler herhangi anlamlı etki göstermedi. mYAL testinde pGlu-Leu skopolaminle bozulmuş öğrenme fonksiyonunu anlamlı olarak düzeltirken, pGlu-Val etki göstermedi. Pasif sakınma testinde ise her iki dipeptid skopolaminle bozulmuş bellek üzerine anlamlı etki göstermedi. Açık alan testinde skopolamin (1 mg/kg) lokomasyonu anlamlı olarak artırırken, dipeptidler bu etkiyi kısmen tersine çevirdi. Açık alan testinde anksiyete üzerine ise ilaçlar herhangi etki göstermedi. Sonuç olarak pGlu-Leu skopolaminle bozulmuş öğrenme üzerine olumlu etki gösterirken, her iki dipeptid skopolaminle bozulmuş bellek üzerine etki göstermedi. Bu sonuçlar pGlu-Leu'nin pGlu-Val'e göre bilişsel bozukluklarda kullanım açısından bir üstünlüğünü göstermektedir ancak bu sonuçlar yeni metodlar kullanılarak desteklenmelidir.

Adipokinetik hormonlar böceklerde yağların mobilizasyonunu sağlayan metabolik nöropeptidlerdir.¹ Bu peptid hormonlar böcek beynine yapılmış nöroendokrin bir bez olan korpora kardiakada yerleşmiş nörosekretuar nöronların ürünleridir. Yakın zamandaki çalışmalarda, adipokinetik hormon/kırmızı pigment konsantre edici hormon peptid ailesinin antidepresan, anksiyolitik ve analjezik etkileri, hiperlokomosyona yol açtığı ve farelerde kronik enjeksiyondan sonra nöroprotektif etkileri gösterilmiştir.¹⁵ Ayrıca, adipokinetik hormon/kırmızı pigment konsantre edici hormon ailesi peptidlerin farelerde akut enjeksiyondan sonra antidepresan, anksiyolitik ve analjezik etkileri bulunmuştur.¹⁶ Diğer bir çalışmada, bu peptidlerin MK-801 ile indüklenen sıçan şizofreni modelinde öğrenme-bellek üzerine olumlu etkileri gösterilmiştir.¹⁷ Ayrıca yine sıçan olfaktör bulbektomi ve posttravmatik stres bozukluğu modellerinde bellek, depresyon ve anksiyete üzerine düzeltici etkileri bulunmuştur.¹⁸

Çeşitli tip böcek adipokinetik hormonları arasında bazı yapısal ve fonksiyonel farklılıklar bulunmaktadır. Kemirgenlerde yapılan önceki çalışmalarda, üç tip böcek adipokinetik hormonu kullanılmıştır, birincisi Anax imperator adipokinetik hormonudur; bu hormonun aminoasid sekansı pGlu-Val-Asn-Phe-Ser-Pro-Ser-Trp-NH₂ şeklindedir. Libellula auripennis adipokinetik hormonu sekansı pGlu-Val-Asn-Phe-Thr-Pro-Ser-Trp-NH₂ şeklindeyken, Phormia-Terra hipertrehalosemik hormon sekansı pGlu-Leu-Thr-Phe-Ser-Pro-Asp-Trp-NH₂ şeklindedir.²³ Önceki çalışmalarda, piroglutamik asid ve piroglutamik peptidleri de içeren adipokinetik hormonun metabolitlerinin adipokinetik hormonun sıçanlara intraperitoneal uygulanmasından sonra kan-beyin bariyerini geçtiği diğer çalışmalar^{2,22} tarafından da desteklendiği şekilde hipotez edilmiştir. Bu metabolitlerin adipokinetik hormonun önceki çalışmalarda¹⁵⁻¹⁸ görülen davranışsal etkilerinden sorumlu olduğunu düşünülmüştür. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmada piroglutamik peptidlerin naif farelerde ve skopolaminle bozulmuş öğrenme-bellek üzerine etkisini çalıştık. L-piroglutamik asid hem glutamata dönüşmekte hem de

beyinde glutamatın etkilerini antagonize etmektedir.³ Ayrıca, yakın zamandaki çalışmalarda, piroglutamik asid skopolaminle indüklenen bellek bozukluğunu tersine çevirdi ve hem kemirgenlerde hem insanlarda kolinerjik aktiviteyi artırdı.^{4,5} Piroglutamik asid ayrıca yaşlı insanlarda ve hayvanlarda bellek üzerine pozitif etkiler gösterdi.⁷ Yiyecek-kaynaklı piroglutamik peptidler farelerde antidepresan ve anksiyolitik etkiler gösterdi.^{2,22,24} Yine yakın zamandaki çalışmalarda piroglutamik peptidlerin farelerde antidepresan ve analjezik etkileri gösterilmiştir.²⁵ Bu çalışmada da önceki çalışmalara dayanarak pGlu-Leu'nin skopolaminle oluşturulmuş öğrenme bozukluğu üzerine olumlu etkisinde glutamaterjik ve kolinerjik sistemlerin rol oynayabileceği düşünülmüştür.

Piroglutamik asid (pGlu) L-glutamik asidin siklik türevidir. Glutamik asidin serbest amino grubunun laktam zinciri oluşturmak için siklize olduğu yaygın olmayan bir aminoasid türevidir. Non-enzimatik olarak glutamat, glutamin ve gama-glutamik peptidler oluşturur fakat ayrıca gama-glutamilsiklotransferazın L-aminoasid üzerindeki etkisi ile oluşabilir. pGlu beyinde kan akımını düzenlemek için tezgah üstü "akıllı ilaç" olarak satılmaktadır. pGlu önceki çalışmalarda sıçanlarda anksiyete ve bellek üzerine olumlu etkiler göstermiştir.^{26,7,5} Yakın zamandaki bir çalışmada, oksirasetam ve D-piroglutamik asid N-metil-D-aspartat reseptör antagonisti 2-amino-5-fosfonoverat tarafından indüklenen pasif sakinme davranışındaki bozulmayı antagonize etmiştir.²⁷ Yine pGlu skopolaminle indüklenen bellek bozukluğunu tersine çevirmiş ve beyin kolinerjik seviyelerini etkilemiştir.^{4,5} Piroglutamik asid yine insanlarda yaşla ilişkili bellek bozukluğunu ve yaşlı sıçanlarda öğrenme bellek kapasitesini düzeltmiştir.^{6,7} Yiyecek kaynaklı piroglutamik peptidler yine farelerde anksiyolitik ve antidepresan-benzeri etkiler göstermiştir.^{2,22}

Piroglutamik peptidler peptidlerin N-terminal pozisyonunda glutamin veya glutamik asid kalıntılarının molekül içi siklasyonundan oluşmuştur. Bu işlem endojen olarak veya peptidleri içeren yiyeceklerin işlenmesi sırasında olu-

şabilir. pGlu peptidlerin farklı özellikleri vardır, özellikle acı ve umami tadları içerir bu yüzden içinde buldukları yiyeceklerin hissi özelliklerini etkileyebilir. Ayrıca pGlu peptidlerin sağlık üzerine bazı olumlu etkileri raporlanmıştır, bunlar arasında hepatoprotektif, antidepresan ve antienflamatuar etkiler bulunmaktadır.²⁴ Bu çalışmada piroglutamik peptid olarak iki dipeptid, piroglutamik asid-valin (pGlu-Val) ve piroglutamik asid-lösin (pGlu-Leu) kullandık. Bunlar kemirgenlerde yapılan önceki çalışmalarda kullanılan adipokinetik hormonların başlangıç sekanslarıdır.¹⁵⁻¹⁸

Önceki çalışmalarda piroglutamik asidin optik sinir hasarından sonra retinal ganglion hücrelerinin sağ kalımına katkıda bulunduğu gösterildi.²⁸ Başka bir çalışmada piroglutamik asid uygulanmasının guinea-pig serebral korteksinden asetilkolin ve GABA salınımını artırdığı belirtildi.²⁹ İntrauterin hipoksiye uğramış sıçanlarda bellek bozukluklarının nooglutil (N-5-hidroksi(nicotinoyl)-L-glutamin asid ve L-piroglutamik-D-alanin amid tarafından düzeltildiği gösterildi.³⁰ Nootropik bileşik L-piroglutamik-D-alanin-amid sıçanlarda etanol maruziyeti ile bozulan hipokampal uzun dönem potansiyalizasyonu düzeltti.³¹ Oksirasetam ve D-piroglutamik asid N-metil-D-aspartat reseptör antagonisti 2-amino-5-fosfonoverat tarafından indüklenen pasif sakinme davranış bozukluğunu antagonize etti.²⁷ Başka bir çalışmada D, L-pGlu'in kortikal ve hipokampal kolinerjik mekanizmalarda etkili olduğu ve diğer 2-oksopirolidon türevleri gibi bellek artırıcı özellikleri gösterildi.⁵ Alzheimer hastalığında kortikal piroglutamik asid amiloid-β seviyelerinin bilişsel azalmaya yol açtığı gösterildi.³²

Önceki çalışmalarda yeni vazopressin parça analogu NC-1900 (pGlu-Asn-Ser-Pro-Arg-Gly-NH₂ acetate)'ün farelerde bellek retansiyon ve geri çağırılması üzerine etkileri çalışıldı. Sonuçlar NC-1900'ün bellek kazanımı ve geri çağırılması üzerinde güçlendirici etkileri olduğunu ve fosfolipaz C-protein kinaz C sisteminin oluşum aşamasında (fakat sonraki aşamalarda değil) ilişkili olabileceğini öner-

di.³³ Başka bir çalışmada NC-1900 hipokampal lezyonlar ile oluşturulan yer öğrenme bozukluklarını azalttı.³⁴

pGlu randomize, çift kör denemede 40 yaşlı hastada bellek bozukluklarında etkinliğinin değerlendirilmesi için plasebo ile karşılaştırıldı. 20 kişi pGlu, 20 kişi plasebo ile 60 gün boyunca tedavi edildi. Tedaviden 60 gün sonra 6 farklı bellek testi ile bellek fonksiyonları değerlendirildi. Sonuçlar pGlu'nin yaşla ilişkili bellek azalmasında bazı sözel bellek fonksiyonlarını düzeltmede etkili olduğunu gösterdi.⁶ Piroglutamik asidin arjinin tuzunun (2-okso-pirolidon karboksilik asid, PCA) yaşlı sıçanlarda öğrenme-bellek kapasiteleri üzerine etkisi subkronik tedavi protokolü (15 gün boyunca 0,1 ve 1 g/kg/gün i.p. enjeksiyon) kullanılarak çalışıldı. Aktif sakınma davranışının kazanılması ve kaybedilmesi sırk-atlama testi ile çalışıldı. Pasif sakınma cevabının retansiyonu pasif sakınma testi ile incelendi. pGlu sırk-atlama cevabının kazanım hızını artırırken, cevabın kaybolmasını inhibe etti. Bu açıdan 1 g/kg dozu 0,1 g/kg dozundan daha güçlüydü. Pasif sakınma testinde de pGlu ile tedavi sakınma retansiyonunda düzelmeye yol açtı. Bu sonuçlar pGlu'nin yaşlı sıçanlarda öğrenme-bellek kapasitesini düzeltten aktif bir bileşik olduğunu göstermektedir.⁷ Piroglutamik asid ve türevlerinin (i.p enjeksiyondan sonra) glutamat ve NMDA (i.c.v.) ile indüklenen nöbetlerdeki koruyucu etkisi farelerde bilinen antiepileptiklerle ve eksitatör aminoasid antagonistleri ile karşılaştırılarak çalışıldı. Piroglutamik asidin ve bazı türevlerinin glutamat ile indüklenen nöbetlerdeki etki gücü valproik aside benzerdi. İlginç olarak, pirolglutamik asid NMDA ile indüklenen nöbetlere etki göstermedi, bu nöbetler diazepam ve 2-amino-5-fosfonoalerik asidle antagonize edildi. Bu yüzden, pirolglutamik asidin non NMDA reseptörlerde eksitatör aminoasid sentezinin başlangıç maddesi olabileceği düşünüldü.³⁵

Başka bir çalışmada L-triptofan (1), L-piroglutamik asit (2), L-piroglutamik-L-triptofan'ın (3) ve eşleşen etil ester türevlerinin (4-6) in vitro emilim özelliği, bu molekülle-

rin oral uygulanmasından sonra çalışıldı. Dipeptidler 3 ve 6 kan beyin bariyerini güçlü şekilde geçmiştir ve ilaçların santral sinir sistemine geçiş hızı artmıştır. Moleküller gastrik ve intestinal bölgede belirgin miktarda emilmiştir. Peptid bağları enzimler tarafından biyolojik sıvılarda hızla yıkıldığından, enzim hidroliz özellikleri doğal gastro-intestinal ortamda çalışılmıştır. 6'nın ester bağı hidrolizi %12 civarında iken, 5 saat sonra 3 ve 6'nın peptid bağı için önemli hidroliz gözlenmemiştir.³⁶

Önceki çalışmalarda, sıçanlarda MK-801 ile oluşturulmuş şizofreni modelinde ve depresyonun olfaktör bulbektomi modelinde adipokinetik hormonun öğrenme ve bellek üzerine olumlu etkileri bulunmuştur. Bu çalışmada da pGlu-Leu mYAL testinde skopolaminle bozulmuş bellek üzerine olumlu etki gösterdi. Önceki çalışmalarda, pirolglutamik asid ve pirolglutamik peptidleri içeren adipokinetik hormon metabolitlerinin kan beyin bariyerini geçerek etki gösterdiği hipotez edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada pGlu-Leu'nun skopolaminle bozulmuş bellek üzerindeki olumlu etkisi, önceki çalışmalarda görülen adipokinetik hormonun bellek üzerine olumlu etkilerinden pirolglutamik peptidlerin sorumlu olabileceği tezini desteklemektedir. Ancak bu çalışmada pGlu-Val'in skopolaminle bozulmuş öğrenme-bellek üzerine herhangi etkisini göremedik. Bu durum kullanılan hayvan türüne, test metodlarına, kullanılan ilaç dozlarına, deney ortamı ve koşullarına bağlı olarak gelişmiş olabilir. Bu yüzden dipeptidlerin farklı dozlarda, farklı bellek fonksiyonları üzerine etkisi yine farklı bellek testleri kullanılarak yeniden çalışılmalı ve net etki aydınlatılmalıdır.

İlaçların lokomosyon ve anksiyete üzerine etkisi çalışma sonuçlarını nonspesifik şekilde etkileyebilmektedir. Bu yüzden bu çalışmada da skopolamin ve dipeptidlerin anksiyete ve lokomosyon üzerine etkisi açık alan testinde incelenmiştir. Açık alan testinde kullanılan ilaçlar anksiyete üzerine etki göstermemiştir, bu durum elde ettiğimiz sonuçların anksiyete ilişkili nonspesifik etkilere bağlı ola-

bileceği durumunu dışlamıştır. Skopolamin ise kullandığımız 1 mg/kg dozunda lokomasyonu kontrol grubu ile karşılaştırıldığında anlamlı olarak artırmıştır. Skopolamin lokomasyonu artırdığı halde ne mYAL testinde ne de pasif sakınma testinde kontrol grubu ile skopolamin grubu arasında anlamlı fark oluşmuştur. Dipeptidler skopolaminin artırmış olduğu lokomasyonu kısmi olarak tersine çevirmiş ancak bu etki dipeptidlerin öğrenme-bellek üzerine etkisinin lokomoyonla ilişkili olabileceğini düşündürecek seviyede olmamıştır. Piroglutamil peptidler naif farelerde de kontrol grubu ile karşılaştırıldığında lokomasyon üzerine etki göstermemiştir. Tüm bu sonuçlar yine bu çalışmada kullanılan dipeptidlerin hem naif farelerde hem de skopolaminle oluşturulmuş öğrenme-bellek bozukluğu üzerindeki etkilerinin lokomoyona bağlı nonspesifik etkilere bağlı olabileceği durumunu dışlamaktadır.

Önceki çalışmalarda, adipokinetik hormonun kanda küçük peptidlere metabolize olduğu ve pGlu ve piroglutamik asid içeren dipeptidlerin kan beyin bariyerini geçebileceği ve adipokinetik hormonun davranış üzerine etkilerinden sorumlu olabileceği gösterilmiştir.¹⁸ Ayrıca, önceki çalışmalarda, adipokinetik hormon/kırmızı pigment konsantre edici hormon peptid ailesinin MK-801 ile indüklenen şizofreni modelinde bellek bozukluğunu tersine çevirdiği gösterilmiş, bu durum bu peptidlerin NMDA reseptörleri üzerinden etki gösterebileceğini düşündürmüştür.¹⁷ L-piroglutamik asid hem glutamata dönüşmekte hem de beyinde glutamatın etkisini antagonize etmekteydi.⁵ Ayrıca, önceki çalışmalarda, adipokinetik hormon sıçan posttravmatik stres modelinde beyin dopamin seviyelerini artırdı.¹⁸ Bu yüzden piroglutamil peptidlerin adipokinetik hormonun aktif metabolitleri olduğu, glutamaterjik ve dopaminerjik sistem üzerinden etki gösterdiği hipotez edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada özellikle pGlu-Leu ile elde ettiğimiz sonuçlarda kolinerjik, glutamaterjik ve dopaminerjik etki mekanizmaları rol oynamış olabilir. Piroglutamil peptidlerin etki mekanizması ileri in vitro ve in vivo çalışmalar ile aydınlatılmalıdır.

SONUÇ

Sonuç olarak pGlu-Leu skopolaminle bozulmuş öğrenme üzerine olumlu etki gösterirken, her iki dipeptid skopolaminle bozulmuş bellek üzerine etki göstermedi. Hem bu çalışma hem önceki çalışmalara dayanarak pGlu-Leu'nin bozulmuş öğrenme üzerine olumlu etkilerinden kolinerjik, glutamaterjik ve dopaminerjik sistemin sorumlu olabileceği düşünülmüştür. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları pGlu-Leu'nin pGlu-Val'e göre bilişsel bozukluklarda kullanım açısından üstünlüğünü göstermektedir ancak bu sonuçlar yeni doz ve metodlar kullanılarak desteklenmelidir. Ayrıca bu peptidlerin etki mekanizması aydınlatılmalıdır.

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Investigation of Antibiotic Prescription Related Factors in Sakarya Province

Sakarya İlinde Antibiyotik Reçetelerine İlişkin Faktörlerin Araştırılması

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Abstract

Introduction	Because consumption of antibiotics is very critical for public health, it was aimed to analyze and evaluate the data of number of antibiotic packages prescribed by Family Physician (FP) and other doctors than family physicians (ODTFPs) serving in the province of Sakarya and Turkey in terms of cost and prescription related factors for 2019.
Materials and Methods	This study was based on the measurement of antibiotic consumption relied on retrospective data. The number of antibiotic packages prescribed for the year 2019 belonging to Turkey and Sakarya province was analyzed and compared based on cost and expertise of physicians. Chi-square test of homogeneity and two-sample Poisson tests were used in the analysis. p value less than 0.05 was accepted as significant.
Results	Consultation per capita for FPs ($z = 307.57$, $p\text{-value} < 0.0001$) and ODTFPs ($z = 278.27$, $p\text{-value} < 0.0001$) in Sakarya were significantly higher than that of those in Turkey. However, both FPs (Chi-Sq = 17231.434, $df = 1$, $p\text{-value} < 0.0001$) and ODTFPs (Chi-Sq = 5197.376, $df = 1$, $p\text{-value} < 0.0001$) in Sakarya prescribed fewer antibiotics than that of in Turkey for 2019. The most prescribed antibiotic group was the J01C group penicillins and its derivatives.
Conclusion	It is thought that the reasons of fewer antibiotics prescribed in Sakarya than in Turkey are related to regular training and feedback to physicians. In this context, feedback policies implemented in hospitals are very valuable for antibiotic consumption management and post-graduate training of physicians is very beneficial for rational antibiotic usage.
Keywords	Antibiotic, consumption, surveillance.

Öz

Amaç	Antibiyotik tüketiminin halk sağlığı açısından oldukça kritik olması nedeniyle, 2019 yılı için maliyet ve reçeteyle ilgili faktörler açısından Sakarya ilinde görev yapan Aile Hekimleri (FP) ve aile hekimleri dışındaki doktorlar (ODTP'ler) tarafından reçete edilen antibiyotik kutu sayılarına ait verilerin analiz edilmesi ve değerlendirilmesi amaçlanmıştır.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Bu çalışma, retrospektif verilere dayanarak antibiyotik tüketiminin ölçülmesine dayanmaktadır. Türkiye ve Sakarya iline ait 2019 yılı için reçete edilen antibiyotik kutu sayıları analiz edilerek maliyet ve hekimlerin uzmanlıklarına göre karşılaştırma yapılmıştır. Analizdeki ki-kare homojenlik testi ve iki örneklili Poisson testi kullanılmıştır. p değerinin 0,05'ten küçük olması anlamlı olarak kabul edilmiştir.
Bulgular	Sakaryadaki FP ($z = 307,57$, $p\text{-değeri} < 0,0001$) ve ODTP'ler ($z = 278,27$, $p\text{-değeri} < 0,0001$) için kişi başına düşen konsültasyon oranı Türkiye'dekilerden anlamlı derecede yüksektir. Ancak Sakaryadaki hem FP (Chi-Sq = 17231.434, $df = 1$, $p\text{-değeri} < 0,0001$) hem de ODTP'lerin (Chi-Sq = 5197.376, $df = 1$, $p\text{-değeri} < 0,0001$) Türkiye geneline göre daha az sayıda antibiyotik reçete ettiği görülmektedir. 2019 yılında en çok reçete edilen antibiyotik grubu J01C penisilinler ve türevleridir.
Sonuç	Sakaryada Türkiye geneline göre daha az antibiyotiğin reçete edilmesinin nedeninin, hekimlere verilen düzenli eğitim ve geri bildirim olduğu düşünülmektedir. Bu bağlamda hastanelerde uygulanan geri bildirim politikaları antibiyotik tüketimi yönetimi açısından oldukça değerlidir ve hekimlerin mezuniyet sonrası eğitimleri de akılcı antibiyotik kullanımı açısından oldukça faydalıdır.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Antibiyotik, tüketim, sürveyans.



INTRODUCTION

Antibiotic overuse and misuse have emerged as critical global concerns, primarily due to the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Studies have revealed that Turkey exhibits a notably high rate of antibiotic consumption compared to Eastern European countries. This excessive utilization of antibiotics contributes significantly to the development of antimicrobial resistance, thereby posing a substantial threat to public health worldwide^{1,2}. Monitoring antibiotic prescriptions serves as a vital component of effective antimicrobial management, a practice already implemented by numerous European countries through the utilization of diverse indicators¹. Given Turkey's considerable consumption of antimicrobials, it becomes imperative to establish and implement antimicrobial management programs, particularly within hospital settings^{3,4}.

To address these pressing issues, the study aims to analyze prescription data from the year 2019, focusing on both Turkey's overall antibiotic consumption and the specific situation within the province of Sakarya. Emphasis will be placed on scrutinizing the prescribing patterns of antibiotics and investigating the potential associations with the respective specialties of the prescribing physicians. Additionally, the study seeks to evaluate the efficacy and impact of the in-service training conducted by the Sakarya Province Health Directorate on antibiotic prescribing practices, while concurrently developing a comprehensive roadmap to guide future strategies. The collaboration between Sakarya University and the Sakarya Province Health Directorate aims to not only assess the number of antibiotic prescriptions but also to evaluate their medical and economic ramifications. By conducting a comprehensive analysis, this study aims to yield valuable insights into antibiotic prescribing practices, which will subsequently inform the development of effective strategies for antibiotic usage in Turkey. Ultimately, the study aspires to enhance patient outcomes and mitigate the threat of antimicrobial resistance.

The present study endeavors to conduct an analysis of antibiotic consumption within Turkey, specifically focusing on the province of Sakarya. The primary objective is to investigate the prescription patterns of antibiotics and their correlation with the specialties of the prescribing physicians. Furthermore, the study aims to assess the impact of in-service training provided by the Sakarya Province Health Directorate on antibiotic prescribing practices, and subsequently develop a comprehensive roadmap for future strategies.

In some countries (Turkey, Korea and Greece), unnecessary and misuse of antibiotics is common, and inappropriate use of antibiotics is frequently encountered both among physicians and the public. Infection control measures may be inadequate compared to many countries, access to antibiotics may be more desirable by the public, antibiotic misuse may be common in the livestock sector, and the increasing demand for antibiotics among the population is a factor in the increase of this resistance. For these reasons, a comprehensive strategy should be developed in these countries and the use of antibiotics should be regulated^{5,6}. In the report of OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) Health Policy Studies,⁶ it is stated that the antimicrobial resistance rate of Turkey is high among OECD member countries. It has been shown that Turkey is the leading country in Europe in antibiotic consumption.⁷ Per capita antibiotic consumption increased by 39% between 2000 and 2015, mainly driven by increases in consumption in low-income and middle-income countries.⁸

The fact that both humans and animals have become resistant to conventional treatments due to increasing disease and infection is the reason why antibiotic consumption has received great media attention in recent years. The emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria as a result of the use of antibiotics in case of illness or infection causes a global health problem.^{9,10,11} Many countries in Europe use a variety of indicators to monitor antibiotic prescrip-

tions as part of their national antimicrobial management.¹² Since Turkey is one of the largest consumers of antimicrobials, antimicrobial management programs are also needed in hospitals in Turkey.¹³

In this study, the prescription data of 2019 were analyzed and the antibiotic consumption in Turkey and in the province of Sakarya, and the antibiotic prescribing relationships with regards to the specialties of the physicians prescribing these prescriptions were investigated. In addition, it was requested to draw up a road map about the effect of the in-service training given by Sakarya Province Health Directorate within the scope of antibiotic prescribing (and use) on the general results and the future strategy. It is also aimed to analyze the number of antibiotic prescriptions and to evaluate their medical and economic effects within the scope of the study carried out jointly by Sakarya University and Sakarya Province Health Directorate.

MATERIAL and METHODS

General situation

In the study, prescription data for 2019 belonging to 83,154,997 people living in Turkey were used. The data on the antibiotic prescriptions of the physicians in Sakarya according to the physicians' speciality (with regards to the physician type) were requested from the Sakarya Province Health Directorate by official correspondence. Antibiotics prescribed for Turkey and Sakarya provinces were examined within the scope of the number of prescriptions, the number of antibiotic prescriptions, the group of antibiotics used, their costs, and consumption data according to physicians' specialty, and the results were compared and interpreted.

The quantity data of the number of antibiotic packages prescribed for the year 2019 belonging to the provinces of Turkey and Sakarya used in the study were obtained from the authorized units of the institution on 17th June 2021 as a result of official correspondence with the Rational Drug Use Department of the Turkish Medicines and Medical

Devices Agency.

Training by Province Health Directorate

Sakarya Province Health Directorate provided online training to FPs to rationalize antibiotic use in 2016, 2018, and 2019. These trainings were organized as eight trainings in total in 2019 and were given by experts authorized by the Ministry of Health.

The content of the training sessions were tailored in such a way to include various medical topics that aim to improve the effectiveness of rational use of antibiotics provided by the Ministry of Health Turkish Medicines and Medical Devices Agency. All 313 FPs in Sakarya province have been ensured to complete the training sessions.

Feedback Mechanism

The objective of this feedback mechanism was to increase the sensitivity of FPs to antibiotic prescribing. In this regard, prescription data for the first six months of 2021 throughout Sakarya province were queried by the Ministry of Health Prescription Information System, and the antibiotic prescribing ratio was determined. Accordingly, 130 FPs above the average among 313 FPs were officially informed by Sakarya Province Health Directorate about the total number of prescriptions, the number of antibiotic prescriptions, and the ratio of antibiotics prescribed in Sakarya Province in an attempt to provide a baseline for antibiotic prescribing.

In addition, in 2020 and the first six months of 2021, a bar chart showing the antibiotic prescribing rates was plotted monthly for a total of 21 FPs whose antibiotic prescription rate was over 30%, delivered with an official letter. In the official letter, the high antibiotic prescribing rate was associated with FP's work intensity. Sakarya Province Health Directorate also declared support to FPs in increasing the preventive health services of the society and eliminating unnecessary usage and side-effects of antibiotic treatment. Additionally, FPs were strongly encouraged to collaborate

with the health directorate on reducing antibiotic consumption.

Statistical Analysis

Chi-square tests of homogeneity were performed to compare the proportion differences across groups regarding the number of prescriptions and number of antibiotic prescriptions. Prescribing rates (number of prescriptions per physician) of physicians were compared under the assumption of Poisson-distributed counts. Tests were considered as significant for the values of P less than 0.05. All the statistical tests were performed with Minitab 15 software.

RESULTS

The number of prescriptions, number of antibiotic prescriptions, antibiotics prescription rate (%), total prescription cost and total antibiotic cost (TL) with regards to physician type (FPs vs. ODTFPs) for Sakarya province and Turkey were presented in Table 1.

Initial analyses were performed to observe whether there were differences between the number of FPs, ODTFPs, and total physicians (FPs+ ODTFPs) per capita for Sakarya province and Turkey. (Sakarya= 1,029,650, Turkey= 83,154,997, year 2019).¹⁴ There was no significant difference in the number of FP per capita between Sakarya province and Turkey (Chi-square=0.577, df=1, p-value=0.447).

However, the ratio of ODTFPs (Chi-square=691.225, df=1, p-value < 0.0001) and the ratio of total physicians (Chi-square = 620.976, df = 1, p-value < 0.0001) were significantly lower in Sakarya province.

FP consultation per capita in Sakarya was significantly higher than FP's consultation in Turkey ($z = 307.57$, p-value < 0.0001). Likewise, ODTFPs consultation per capita in Sakarya was significantly higher than ODTFPs consultation per capita in Turkey ($z = 278.27$, p-value < 0.0001). According to the statistical data of the Ministry of Health, the number of consultation to a physician per capita in Turkey in 2019 is 6.6 in the OECD (35) and 9.8 in Turkey, while this rate is 10.8 in Sakarya.¹⁵ This shows that the number of doctor visits in Sakarya is above both Turkey and OECD averages.

Using the data in Table 1, prescribing patterns of antibiotics were analyzed considering the percentage of antibiotics prescribed in the total prescriptions (number of prescriptions for antibiotic/total number of prescriptions). The percentage of prescriptions for antibiotics in Sakarya province was less than in Turkey (Chi-Sq = 20200.208, df = 1, p-value < 0.0001). When the analyses were broken according to the physician specialty, it was observed that the ratio of antibiotics prescribed by FPs in Sakarya was less than that of those prescribed by FPs in Turkey (Chi-Sq = 17231.434, df = 1, p-value < 0.0001). Likewise, ODTFPs in Sakarya prescribed fewer antibiotics than that of ODTFPs in Turkey (Chi-Sq = 5197.376, df = 1, p-value <

Table 1. Some important parameters for prescribed antibiotics for Sakarya and Turkey in 2019.^{14,15}

	Sakarya Province		Turkey	
	FP	ODTFP	FP	ODTFP
Number of Prescription	2,578,819	3,076,130	168,178,768	208,810,026
Number of Antibiotic Prescription	389,119*	818,669	30,723,783	59,472,945
Antibiotics prescription rate (%)	15.09*	26.61†	18.27*	28.48†
Total Antibiotic Cost (TL)	7,641,113.79	19,429,862.26	600,479,714.57	1,812,608,145.44
Total Prescription Cost (TL)	260,374,553.18	328,716,615.87	19,429,487,004.69	27,312,296,295.83
Number of Physicians	314	1,109	26,476	193,735
Number of beds (per 10.000 population)	19.20		28.50	
Population	1,029,650		83,154,997	

*,† Significantly lower in the Sakarya region, p-value<0.000

0.0001).

In this study, antibiotics were defined for systemic use of antibiotics class J01 of the WHO Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical (ATC) classification system. Sales data of antibiotics for the year 2019 were collected from Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association of Turkey (IEIS) and IMS Health Inc.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of antibiotics prescribed in Turkey and Sakarya according to ATC codes. It is seen that the contents of antibiotics prescribed in Turkey and Sakarya tend to be in the same direction. In addition, it is understood that Penicillins (J01 C) were prescribed at the highest rate and Aminoglycosides (J01G) were prescribed at the lowest rate as the antibiotic type. The antibiotics which are listed in Figure1: J01A Tetracyclines, J01C Beta-Lactam Antibacterials, Penicillins, J01D Other Beta-Lactam Antibacterials, J01F Macrolides, Lincosamides And Streptogramins, J01G Aminoglycoside Antibacteri-

als, J01M Quinolone Antibacterials and J01X Other Antibacterials.

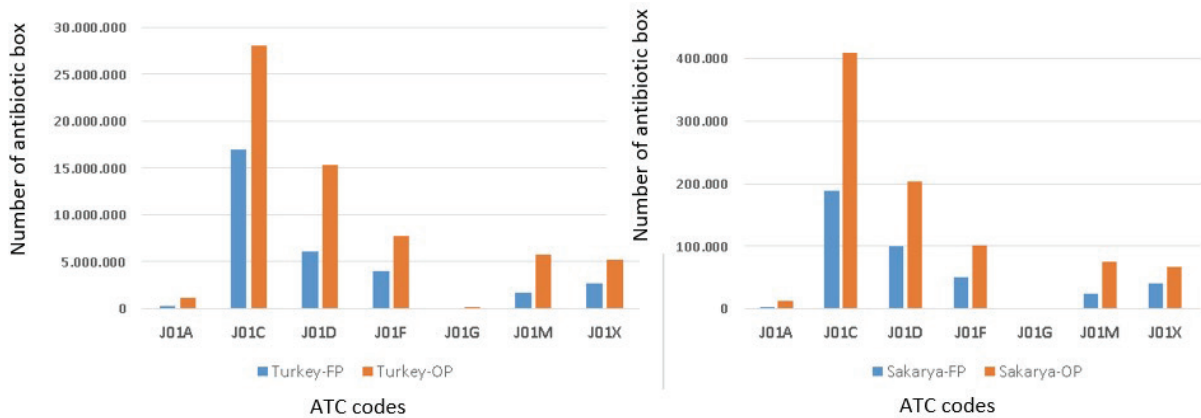


Figure 1. Prescribed antibiotics in Turkey (TR) and Sakarya (54)

Further analyses were performed to investigate the group of antibiotics prescribed in Figure 1. Figure 2a and 2.b show the bar chart of prescribed antibiotic types for Sakarya and Turkey, respectively, for 2019. Accordingly, “Amoxicillin and enzyme inhibitor”, “Clarithromycin”, “Cefuroxime”, and “Cefixime” were some of the most commonly prescribed antibiotics, in both charts.

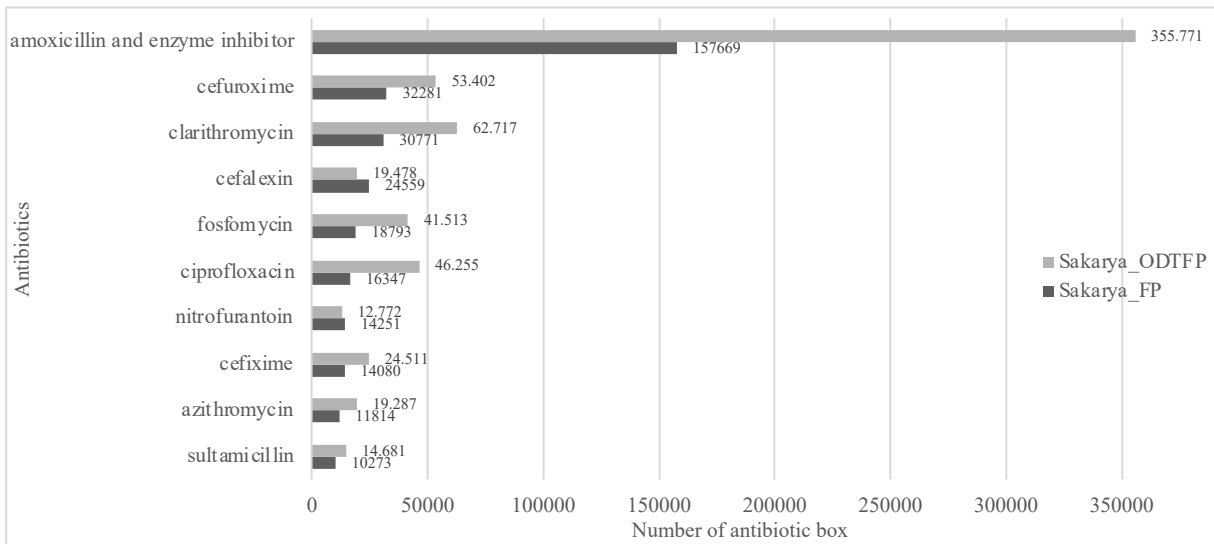


Figure 2a. Bar chart for prescribed antibiotics by FPs and ODFPs in Sakarya

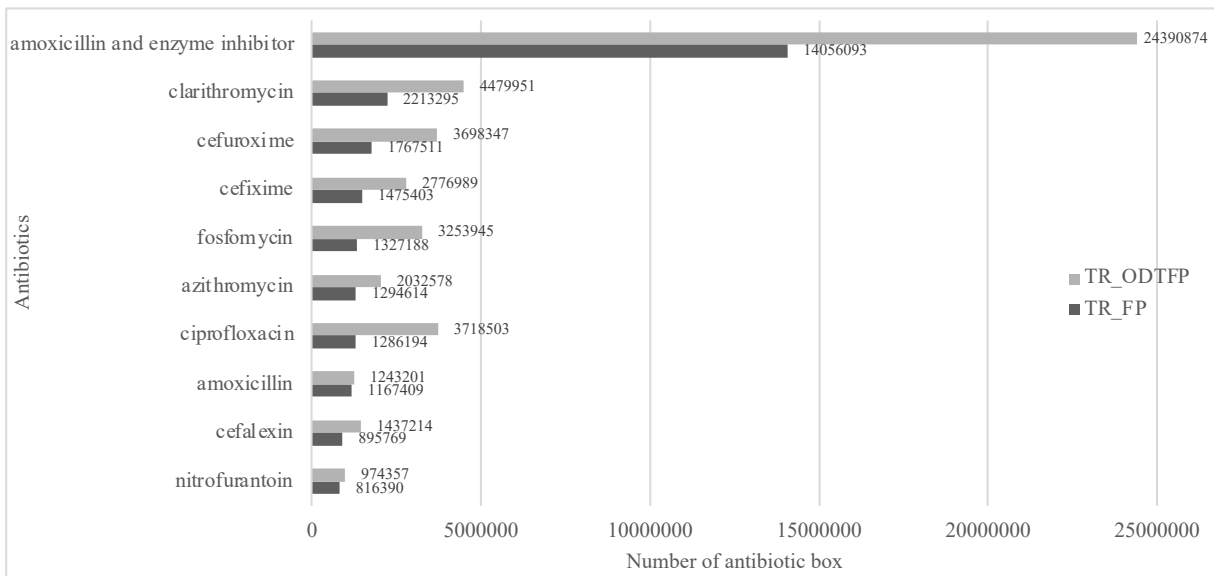


Figure 2b. Bar chart for prescribed antibiotics by FPs and ODFPs in Turkey

DISCUSSION

The number of prescriptions in Sakarya province is 1.5% of the total prescriptions in Turkey. Among those prescriptions in Sakarya, 45.6% is covered by FP. The ratio of antibiotic prescription of FP is 34.06% and 32.22% for Turkey and Sakarya respectively. From the economical burden, Sakarya accounts for 1.12% of the total antibiotic cost in Turkey. FP in Sakarya was responsible for 28.23% of total antibiotic cost while the same ratio was 24.88% in Turkey (see Table 1).

The number of beds in the hospitals in Sakarya province is 19.20 for 2019, and Sakarya ranks 74th among 81 provinces in the number of beds per 10 thousand people in Turkey. The main factor determining the number of physicians other than FPs is the bed capacity in that province. Due to the low bed capacity of Sakarya, the number of ODT-FPs is also low. It is thought that the ODT-FPs difference between Turkey and Sakarya will be closed by increasing the bed capacity in the province with legal regulations. The number of specialist physicians in Sakarya is lower than the number of specialist physicians in Turkey. However, there is no difference in FPs. Because the number of FPs is determined according to the population of that province. The number of FPs and ODT-FPs should be balanced with the population. Fewer ODT-FPs except FPs in Sakarya serve more patients than the average in Turkey.

Despite the fact that fewer specialist physicians and much more patients are consulted in Sakarya in general than in Turkey, the rate of prescribing antibiotics in Sakarya is below the Turkey average. The reason for this is thought to be the training and feedback given to both specialists and FPs in Sakarya.^{16,17,18} Feedback is a very important regulation tool that affects people and their behavior. With regular, synchronous feedback mechanisms without any intervention to people and without punishment or reward, physicians' drug-prescribing behaviors and their antibiotic-using behaviors can be changed. The physician who thinks that he is under control (follow-up), changes his

behavior in order to be least affected by this follow-up. It is thought that the physician who knows that the antibiotic use behavior is tracked and reported back by the Sakarya Province Health Directorate, prescribed fewer and more justified antibiotics. It is known that a physician who used to prescribe antibiotics easily and frequently in many indications no longer prescribes antibiotics thanks to the feedback mechanism. A similar result was obtained in FPs. It is thought that the fact that FPs in Sakarya prescribe antibiotics less often than FPs in Turkey is the result of these feedbacks and regular training.^{19,20,21}

The limitations of this study are that the data are retrospective and not defined as Defined Daily Dose (DDD). In addition, the fact that the reasons for the indication-based antibiotic prescribing of the physicians were not included in the study causes insufficient data to be obtained to show the cause-effect relationships.

Frequently prescribed drugs are antibiotics that are generally taken orally and are not subject to any legal restrictions and can be easily prescribed by FPs and other specialists. It is seen that the more easily an antibiotic is available, the more it is consumed. The data we obtained are important in understanding antibiotic use in the Sakarya region, and the results show that antibiotic consumption could be reduced through interventions such as education and feedback. However, we think that new research on the subject is essentially needed.

The data we obtained are important for providing data on antibiotic use in the region we live in, and we have shown that antibiotic consumption can be reduced through interventions such as education and feedback. We think that new research on the subject is needed.

Acknowledgements

The authors thanks the Turkish Medicines and Medical Devices Agency Department of Rational Use of Medicines for its support of antibiotics data.

Ethical statement

Non-interventional Ethics Committee approval was obtained for the study from Sakarya University Faculty of Medicine Dean's Office on 20th October, 2020 (71522473/050.01.04/532 Issue 20/10/2020). After this approval, an antibiotic data request was made from Turkish Medicines and Medical Devices Agency Department of Rational Use of Medicines (25.11.2020).

Authors' contributions

All of the authors participated in the design of the study. HP and AYY obtained data. EEK analyzed and processed data via software. OK and AO interpreted the results. All the authors drafted and the approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Conflicts of interest

None declared.

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Survival, Failure Patterns, and Toxicity Outcomes in Endometrial Cancer Patients Receiving Adjuvant Radiotherapy

Adjuvan Radyoterapi Uygulanan Endometrium Kanseri Hastalarında Sağkalım, Nüks Paternleri ve Toksikite Sonuçları

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Abstract

Introduction	This study aimed to investigate the survival outcomes, recurrence patterns, and treatment-related toxicities of endometrial cancer (EC) patients who underwent adjuvant radiotherapy.
Materials and Methods	Between January 2012 and December 2021, one hundred fourteen patients who underwent adjuvant radiotherapy with the diagnosis of endometrial cancer were retrospectively analyzed. Cases were evaluated for overall survival (OS), disease-free survival (DFS), local recurrence-free survival (LRFS), cancer-specific survival (CSS), and distant metastasis-free survival (DMFS).
Results	Median follow-up was 63 months (8 -135). At 5 years OS, DFS, LRFS, CSS, and DMFS were 85.5%, 90.5%, 98.9%, 94.1%, and 90.5%, respectively. Univariate analysis of lymphovascular space invasion (LVSI) is statistically significant for DFS, DMFS, and CSS, respectively (p=0.019, p=0.019, p=0.021) and histology, tumor grade, stage were statistically significant for LRFS, respectively (p=0.031, p=0.010, p=0.049). Grade 1 and 2 acute gastrointestinal toxicity were observed in 40 patients (35.1%). Grade 1 acute genitourinary toxicity was observed in 35 patients (30.7%). Grade 3 late genitourinary and gastrointestinal toxicity was observed in 0.9% and 1.8%, respectively.
Conclusion	Histology, grade, LVSI, and stage didn't significantly affect overall survival, but LVSI and stage were the most influential prognostic factors on relapse patterns. Adjuvant radiotherapy is safe and well tolerated by patients with endometrial cancer with acceptable toxicity.
Keywords	Endometrial Cancer, Adjuvant Radiotherapy, Survival, Treatment-related toxicity

Öz

Amaç	Bu çalışma, adjuvan radyoterapi uygulanan endometrium kanseri (EK) hastalarının sağkalım sonuçlarını, nüks paternlerini ve tedaviye bağlı toksisiteyi araştırmayı amaçladı.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Ocak 2012-Aralık 2021 tarihleri arasında endometrium kanseri tanısı ile adjuvan radyoterapi uygulanan 114 hasta retrospektif olarak incelendi. Vakalar, genel sağkalım (GS), hastaliksiz sağkalım (HSK), lokal rekürrensiz sağkalım (LRSK), kansere spesifik sağkalım (KSS) ve uzak metastazsız sağkalım (UMSK) açısından değerlendirildi.
Bulgular	Medyan takip süresi 63 aydı (8 -135). 5 yıllık GS, HSK, LRSK, KSS ve UMSK, sırasıyla, %85.5, %90.5, %98.9, %94.1 ve %90.5 idi. Tek değişkenli analizde, lenfovasküler alan invazyonu (LVAI) ile HSK, UMSK ve KSS arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir ilişki vardı (sırasıyla, p=0.019, p=0.019, p=0.021). LRSK ile histoloji, tümör derecesi, evre arasında anlamlı ilişki vardı. (sırasıyla, p=0.031, p=0.010, p=0.049). 40 hastada (%35.1), grade 1 ve 2 akut gastrointestinal toksisite gözlemlendi. 35 hastada (%30.7), grade 1 akut genitouriner toksisite gözlemlendi. Grade 3 geç genitouriner ve gastrointestinal toksisite sırasıyla %0.9 ve %1.8 oranında gözlemlendi.
Sonuç	Histoloji, grade, LVAI ve evre genel sağkalımı üzerinde anlamlı etkisi olmamasına karşın, LVAI ve evre nüks açısından en etkili prognostik faktörlerdi. Adjuvan radyoterapi güvenli ve kabul edilebilir toksisite ile endometrium kanserli hastalar tarafından iyi tolere edilmektedir.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Endometrium Kanseri, Adjuvan Radyoterapi, Sağkalım, Tedaviye bağlı toksisite



INTRODUCTION

Endometrial cancer (EC) is the sixth most common malignancy worldwide.¹ The first symptom of ECs is often abnormal or postmenopausal uterine bleeding. Endometrioid carcinoma is usually associated with unopposed estrogenic stimulation and endometrial hyperplasia.² Endometrial cancer histologic subtypes are classified as endometrioid and non-endometrioid. Endometrioid types accounts for the majority of endometrial cancers and most commonly occur is generally hormone-dependent, and have a more favorable prognosis. Grade 3 endometrioid cancers are more complex and generally have a less favorable prognosis. Non-endometrioid cancers include more aggressive subtypes such as serous cancers, clear cell cancers, and carcinosarcomas.³

The primary treatment for EC is surgery, and the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) advocates surgical staging, including pelvic and para-aortic lymphadenectomy and total abdominal hysterectomy (TAH) and bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy. Adjuvant radiotherapy (RT), including external beam pelvic radiotherapy (EBRT) and/or vaginal brachytherapy (VBT), proves a good prognosis and is generally recommended based on risk stratification.^{4,5}

Adjuvant therapy indications depend on age, grade, histological type, myometrial invasion depth, and lymphovascular space invasion (LVSI) presence.⁴ LVSI is a strong prognostic factor for pelvic recurrence, distant metastasis, and decreased overall survival.⁶ Early diagnosis of EC generally improves outcomes, whereas 5-year OS is worse in patients with advanced disease, ranging from 57% to 66% (FIGO stage III) and 20% to 26% (FIGO stage IV). 5-year DFS is estimated at 90% in patients without lymph node metastasis, 60–70% in those with pelvic lymph node metastasis, and 30–40% in those with para-aortic lymph node metastasis.^{7,8}

This study aims to examine the survival outcomes, recur-

rence patterns, and toxicities of patients with EC diagnosed with adjuvant radiotherapy.

MATERIALS and METHODS

In this study, the data of patients who underwent adjuvant radiotherapy with the diagnosis of endometrial cancer between January 2012 and December 2021 in the Radiation Oncology unit of Sakarya Training and Research Hospital were retrospectively analyzed. The study included 114 patients who met the criteria. Patients excluded from the study were those who received radiotherapy with palliative or definitive intent and those with incomplete data. This study was approved by Sakarya University Institutional Review Board (E-71522473-050.01.04-241720-167)

Demographic characteristics and age of the patients, myometrial invasion depth of the tumor, lymphovascular space invasion and tumor size, RT technique and doses were analyzed. Outcomes were overall survival (OS), disease-free survival (DFS), local recurrence-free survival (LRFS), cancer-specific survival (CSS) and distant metastasis-free survival (DMFS).

Patient and Tumor Characteristics

In total, one hundred fourteen patients were included. Ninety-nine patients (86.8%) were with endometrioid type histology. Sixty-six patients (57.9%) were at Stage I (29 in Stage IA and 37 in Stage IB), 25 patients (21.9%) were in Stage II and 23 patients (20.2%) were at Stage III (six in Stage IIIA, one in Stage IIIB, seven in Stage IIIC1 and nine in Stage IIIC2). The patient and tumor characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Surgery

Ten patients (8.8%) underwent TAH and BSO without lymphadenectomy, 33 patients (28.9%) underwent pelvic lymphadenectomy in addition to TAH and BSO and 71 patients (62.3%) underwent pelvic and para-aortic lymphadenectomy and peritoneal washing in addition to TAH and BSO.

Table 1. The patient and tumor characteristics	
Characteristics	Number of patients (%)
Age, years (median, range)	64 (30-81)
<60	38 (33.3)
60-70	44 (37.7)
>70	32 (30)
Histology	
Endometrioid	99 (86.8)
Non-endometrioid	15 (13.2)
Grade	
Grade1-2	75 (65.8)
Grade3	34 (29.8)
Unknown	5 (4.4)
Tumor Size, cm (median, range)	5 (1-11)
Lymphovascular space invasion	
Yes	33 (29)
No	65 (57)
Unknown	16 (14)
Stage	
I	66 (57.9)
II	25 (21.9)
III	23 (20.2)
Lymph node presence	
Positive	14 (12.3)
Negative	100 (87.7)

Radiotherapy

Planning CT scans of the patients were taken in a 2.5 mm section thickness, in the supine position. RT was performed using the three-dimensional conformal radiotherapy (3D-CRT) or volumetric-modulated arc therapy (VMAT) technique for all patients. EBRT was given at a dose of 50.4 Gy in 1.8 Gy fractions in 29 patients (25.4%), 45 Gy in 1.8 Gy fractions in 83 patients (72.8%) and 46 Gy in 2 Gy fractions in 2 patients (2%). The median total dose of radiotherapy was 45 Gy and the median fraction size was 1.8 Gy. Nine patients (7.9%) with para-aortic lymph node metastases were also irradiated to the para-aortic field. After EBRT, HDR brachytherapy was applied to the vaginal cuff in 87 patients (76.3%). For brachytherapy, the dose was 5 to 7 Gy (median, 6 Gy) administered in 2 to 4 fractions

(median, 3 fractions).

Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy was administered to 28 patients (24.6%) with stage 3 disease or non-endometrioid histology. Chemotherapy was administered as 6 cycles of paclitaxel and carboplatin before radiotherapy.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis was performed by using the SPSS 21.0 software package. Survival analysis was performed using the Kaplan and Meier method. Univariate analysis was performed using the log-rank test. OS, DFS, LRFS, CSS and DMFS were calculated starting from the date of the biopsy. $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Follow-up

Patients were followed up with general clinical examination, pelvic examination, laboratory tests, and imaging studies every 3 to 6 months in the first two years of their follow-up, and every 6 to 12 months thereafter.

RESULTS

Median follow-up was 63 months (8 -135). The median age was 64 years (30 to 81 years). Tumor size, histology, age, presence of lymph nodes, tumor grade, LVSI, myometrial invasion depth, tumor localization, and chemotherapy application were analyzed by univariate analysis in terms of OS, DFS, LRFS, CSS, DMFS. Statistically significant data are shown in Table 2.

Outcome and pattern of failure

At the last control, 90 patients (78.9%) were alive, 24 patients (21.1%) died (8 patients (7%) died due to endometrial cancer). Local recurrence was observed in 2 patients (1.8%) and distant metastases were observed in 11 patients (9.6%). The most common isolated organ metastasis was lung metastasis in 3 patients (27.3%) and liver metastasis in 3 patients (27.3%). Other organ metastases were present in 5 patients (37.2%).

Table 2. Univariate analysis affecting OS, DFS, LRFS, DMFS, and CSS

Patient characteristics	OS	DFS	LRFS	DMFS	CSS
	Univariate analysis	Univariate analysis	Univariate analysis	Univariate analysis	Univariate analysis
	p	p	p	p	p
Histology	0.688	0.657	0.031	0.518	0.848
Grade	0.194	0.669	0.010	0.642	0.525
LVSI	0.766	0.019	0.518	0.019	0.021
Stage	0.246	0.007	0.049	0.020	0.135

LVSI, lymphovascular space invasion; OS, overall survival; DFS, disease-free survival; LRFS, local recurrence-free survival, CSS, cancer-specific survival; DMFS, distant metastasis-free survival.

Overall Survival and Disease-Free Survival

For all patients, the OS at 5 years was 85.5% and the DFS at 5 years 90.5%. 5-year OS and DFS patients are shown in Figure 1.

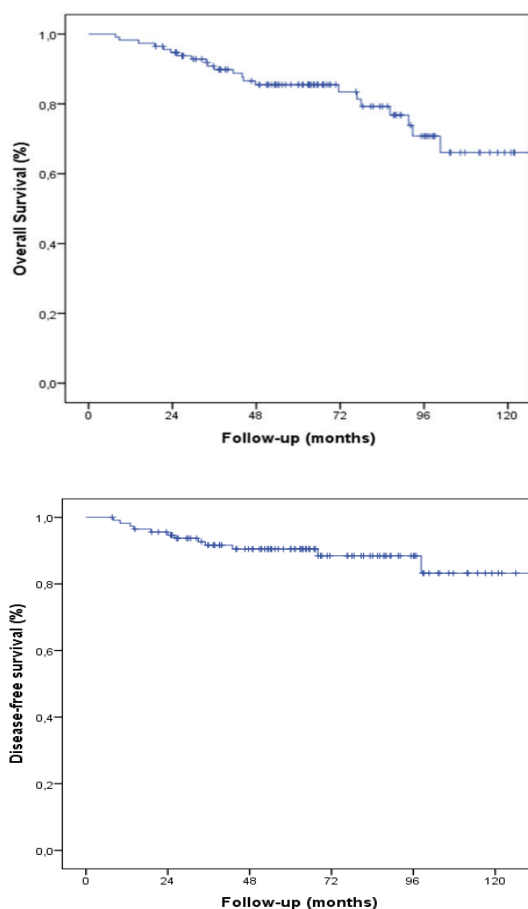


Figure 1: Overall survival and disease-free survival at 5 years

When the univariate analysis of tumor size, histology, age, presence of lymph nodes, tumor grade, LVSI, myometrial invasion depth, tumor localization, and chemotherapy application is examined in terms of OS and DFS; there wasn't any significant relationship with these factors for OS. There was a significant relationship between LVSI and stage, for DFS (respectively $p=0.019$ and 0.007); there was no significant relationship between histology, and grade. (Respectively $p=0.657$, 0.669).

Local Relapse-Free Survival, Cancer-Specific Survival, and Distant Metastasis-Free Survival

The LRFS for all patients at 5 years was 98.9%, the CSS at 5 years were and 94.1% and the DMSF at 5 years was and 90.5%.

When the univariate analysis of tumor size, histology, age, presence of lymph nodes, tumor grade, LVSI, myometrial invasion depth, tumor localization, and chemotherapy application is examined in terms of LRFS and CSS, DMFS; histology, tumor grade, stage was statistically significant prognostic factor for LRFS, (respectively $p=0.031$, $p=0.010$, $p=0.049$). LVSI was statistically significant for DMFS and CSS, (respectively $p=0.019$, $p=0.021$).

Toxicity

Acute Toxicity

Acute gastrointestinal toxicity was observed in 50 patients (35.1%). Grade 1 and 2 acute gastrointestinal toxicity were observed in 36 patients (31.6%) and 4 patients (3.5%), res-

pectively. Grade 1 acute genitourinary toxicity was observed in 35 patients (30.7%).

Late Toxicity

Grade 1-2 late gastrointestinal toxicity was observed in 6 patients (5.3%). Grade 3 late toxicity was observed as 0.9% genitourinary and 1.8% gastrointestinal.

DISCUSSION

We retrospectively reviewed single-center data of EC patients who underwent adjuvant RT and analyzed data on survival outcomes, pattern of failure, and treatment-related toxicities of patients.

Many studies, in EC; showed that age, stage, histology, tumor grade, lymphovascular involvement, and myometrial invasion are important prognostic factors.⁹⁻¹¹ Two important nomograms are available to predict survival. The first consists of five criteria: age at diagnosis, negative lymph nodes, FIGO stage, final histological grade, and histological subtype.¹² Secondly, age, tumor grade, and lymphovascular area involvement were shown to be highly predictive in the PORTEC 1 and PORTEC 2 trials.¹³ Similarly, in this study, we found that histology, LVSI, grade, and stage for endometrial cancer adversely affect survival. However, we could not find a significant effect of age and myometrial invasion on survival. When evaluated according to histological type, in studies conducted that the endometrioid type has a better prognosis. The non-endometrioid types are more aggressive.^{14,15} In our study, endometrioid histology was more common (86.8%), which supports the literature, and non-endometrioid histopathology was statistically significant for LRFS as a poor prognostic factor. ($p=0.031$).

In studies conducted, the rate of LVSI varies between 12% and 34%.¹⁶⁻¹⁸ The presence of vascular invasion has been a strong prognostic factor in studies of various malignant tumors, including endometrial carcinoma. Vascular invasion is considered an early step in the metastatic process and is

important for the progression of malignant tumors.¹⁹ Ra-sool et al. examined 176 patients with endometrial cancer and found that LVSI was not predictive of recurrence or poor outcome.²⁰ In contrast, Gaducci et al. found that LVSI was associated with distant, hematogenous insufficiency.²¹ Similarly, in our study, the rate of LVSI was 28.9%, and DFS and CSS were found to be significantly lower in patients with LVSI involvement, respectively ($p=0.019$, $p=0.021$).

A three-tiered grading system (as suggested by FIGO) was used to evaluate tumor grade, where the solid growth pattern was up to 5% for Grade 1 tumors, 6 to 50% for Grade 2 tumors, and more than 50% for Grade 3 tumors. Grade 1 and 2 tumors are usually classified as low grade and fall under the type I classification and typically have a good prognosis; grade 3 tumors are classified as high grade and fall under the type II classification and tend to be more aggressive with a poorer prognosis.²² In our study, grade 1-2 tumors were seen in 65.8% and grade 3 tumors in 29.8%. Supporting the literature, grade 3 tumors as a poor prognostic factor were found to be statistically significant in terms of LRFS ($p=0.010$).

5-year overall survival in EC by FIGO surgical stage; IA(90.3%), IB (80.85%), II (80.5%), IIIA (68.5%), IIIB (53.1%), IIIC1 (58.3%), IIIC2 (51.2%, IVA (22%) and IVB (21.1%).²³ In our study, 5-year OS stage I (88.2%), stage II (92.4%) and stage III (67.6%) ($p=0.246$), 5-year CSS, stage I (98.8%), stage II (92.4%) and stage III (86.9%), ($p=0.135$), 5-year DFS and DMFS, stage I (96.8%), stage II (81%) and stage III (83%), ($p=0.007$, $p=0.020$), respectively, 5-year LRFS, stage I (100%), stage II (95.8%) and stage III (100%), ($p=0.049$). In our study, OS and CSS were higher in stage II patients compared to stage III patients, while LRFS, DFS, and DMFS were significantly lower, unlike the literature. According to our results, the presence of a tumor invading the stromal connective tissue of the cervix can be considered as a poor prognostic factor in terms of distant metastasis and local recurrence. Ferriss JS et al. found that deep cervical stromal invasion was an independent predictor of

death in stage II endometrial cancers.²⁴ When a subgroup analysis is performed for stage III, it can be understood whether this difference is due to lymph node involvement or neighboring organ invasion. However, subgroup analysis could not be performed due to the small number of stage 3 patients in our study.

Overall, randomized prospective studies have not demonstrated OS benefit, although adjuvant RT can significantly reduce the risk of local recurrence for early-stage endometrial cancer. Because of the high risk of death from comorbidities in this elderly population, most trials were not powered for OS. Acute side effects of adjuvant radiotherapy may include fatigue, cystitis, diarrhea, skin irritation, and vaginitis.²⁵ In addition, adjuvant therapy for the whole pelvis may be associated with toxicities such as urinary incontinence and fecal leakage, adversely affecting long-term quality of life.²⁶ In our study, similar to the literature, 5-year OS was lower than CSS, DFS, LRFS, and DMFS, respectively. (85.5%, 94.1%, 90.5%, 98.9%, and 90.5%). In our study, Grade 1 and 2 acute gastrointestinal toxicity was observed in 40 patients (35.1%), and Grade 1 acute genitourinary toxicity was observed in 35 patients (30.7%). Grade 3 late toxicity was observed in 0.9% genitourinary and 1.8% gastrointestinal.

Our study has some limitations. Most importantly, it is a retrospective study. It also includes all stages and histopathology of endometrial cancer. In addition, our study's small number of patients didn't allow us to perform subgroup analysis. The results of clinical studies with larger patient groups will contribute to the creation of the most appropriate multidisciplinary strategy according to histological subtype and stage.

CONCLUSION

OS was lower than CSS in patients with endometrial cancer due to comorbidities, and there was no significant result in terms of risk factors in univariate analysis. However, the presence of LVSI was found to be a poor prognostic

factor for CSS in univariate analysis. Treatment-related toxicity was tolerable and the grade 3 toxicity rate was very low. This study demonstrated that adjuvant RT is a safe and effective treatment option for patients with endometrial cancer.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare for this paper.

Authorship contributions: Concept –HH, SGA; Design – HH, SGA; Data collection and/or processing – HH; Data analysis and/or interpretation – HH, SGA; Literature search – HH, SGA; Writing – HH, SGA; Critical review – HH, SGA.

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Interobserver Agreement in Magnetic Resonance Imaging of Active Sacroiliitis

Aktif Sakroileitin Manyetik Rezonans Görüntülemesinde Gözlemciler Arasındaki Uyum

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Abstract

Introduction	Axial spondyloarthritis has characteristic clinical features such as enthesitis, sacroiliitis and spondylitis, and extra-articular manifestations. Sacroiliitis (SI) occurs as a result of inflammation of the sacroiliac joint. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of sacroiliac (SI) joints is used to detect early sacroiliitis. Sometimes, there can be variations in the interpretation of MRI findings of the SI joint among observers. Our aim was to investigate the inter-observer agreement among the observers.
Materials and Methods	The study included the MRI results of 1150 patients who were diagnosed with active or chronic sacroiliitis based on the findings from sacroiliac MRIs, or whose MRI was deemed indicative of sacroiliitis by the rheumatologist. 1150 MRIs were re-evaluated by a different and expert radiologist.
Results	Out of the total 1150 patients investigated within the scope of this study. A statistically significant disparity emerged between the assessments provided by the expert radiologists and those obtained from outsourced radiologist evaluations.
Conclusion	The diagnosis of spondyloarthropathy may be delayed for some reasons. If the patient's clinic and MRI report are not consistent, the patient should not be removed from follow-up.
Keywords	Ankylosing spondylitis, magnetic resonance imaging, inter-observer agreement

Öz

Amaç	Aksiyal spondiloartropatiler entezit, sakroileit ve spondilit gibi karakteristik klinik özelliklere sahiptir, ayrıca eklem dışı belirtiler de görülebilir. Sakroileit (SI), sakroiliak eklemin inflamasyonu sonucu oluşur. SI eklem manyetik rezonans görüntülemesi (MRG), erken sakroileiti tespit etmek için kullanılır. Bazen SI eklem MRG bulgularının yorumlanmasında gözlemciler arasında farklılıklar olabilir. Amacımız, gözlemciler arasındaki uyumu araştırmaktır.
Yöntem ve Gereçler	Çalışma, sakroiliak MRG bulgularına dayanarak aktif veya kronik sakroileiti teşhis konulan ve/veya MRG sonuçları romatolog tarafından sakroileiti gösterir nitelikte bulunan 1150 hastanın MRG sonuçlarını içeriyordu. 1150 MRG uzman bir radyolog tarafından yeniden değerlendirildi.
Bulgular	Bu çalışma kapsamında incelenen toplam 1150 hastadan; uzman radyoloğun değerlendirmeleri ile dış kaynaklı radyolog değerlendirmeleri arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir farklılık ortaya çıktı.
Sonuç	Spondiloartropatilerin teşhisi bazı nedenlerle gecikebilir. Eğer hastanın klinik durumu ve MRG raporu tam uyum göstermiyorsa, hastanın takipten çıkarılmaması gerekmektedir.
Anahtar Kelimeler	Ankilozan spondilit, manyetik rezonans görüntüleme, gözlemciler arası uyum



INTRODUCTION

Conditions within the category of axial spondyloarthritis are classified into two distinct groups: radiographic sacroiliitis or ankylosing spondylitis, and non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis. This division is based on the presence of radiographic sacroiliitis in conjunction with clinical manifestations.¹ Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS) primarily affects the axial skeleton and the sacroiliac joint. AS is a chronically inflammatory disease with an etiology that is not fully understood and a progressive course.² Its prevalence varies across different geographical regions. For instance, while the prevalence of AS in Turkey is around 0.49%, it is approximately 1.4% in other countries.³ In progressive cases, functional impairment accompanies joint fusion, whereas early diagnosis and appropriate treatment can lead to substantial clinical remission rates. Despite the ongoing uncertainty surrounding its etiology, it is acknowledged that inflammation plays a significant role in the pathogenesis and progression of the disease.⁴ While advancements have been made in the diagnosis of spondyloarthritis in recent times, the refinement of imaging techniques employed in diagnostic procedures remains an ongoing process.⁵ Timely identification and implementation of early therapeutic strategies for these individuals are imperative to preempt and manage associated conditions and avert potential future functional impairment. In addition to the patient's medical background, diagnostic measures encompass imaging techniques like sacroiliac joint radiography and sacroiliac magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).⁶ For disease diagnosis, prognosis estimation, and treatment response assessment, it is essential to monitor the degree of inflammation at regular intervals. However, there is no universally established standard laboratory method for this purpose.⁷ Currently, sedimentation rate (ESR) and C-reactive protein (CRP) are commonly employed inflammatory markers due to their reliability and cost-effectiveness. Despite their widespread use, these tests have limitations including low sensitivity and specificity, as well as their ability to reflect short-term inflammatory activity.⁸ Furthermore, elevated levels of these parameters have

been observed in only around 70% of individuals with active disease.⁹ MRI assumes a pivotal role in diagnosing and monitoring sacroiliitis in spondyloarthritis cases. Notably, active sacroiliitis lesions detected through MRI are crucial for both diagnosing the condition and evaluating the persistence of active inflammation. As time progresses, the significance of structural lesions grows in terms of diagnosis and ongoing monitoring.¹⁰ Due to rising demands and costs, outsourcing teleradiology services maintain their relevance and it is also utilized in the monitoring and treatment of rheumatological conditions.¹¹

We opted to assess the level of agreement among observers concerning active MRI findings of the sacroiliac (SI) joint. This evaluation pertains to both radiologists from outsourced radiology services and expert radiologists specializing in musculoskeletal diseases.

MATERIAL and METHODS

During the period from 2015 to 2019, a total of 8100 sacroiliac MRIs were conducted at our hospital. The study focused on the MRI results of 1150 patients who were either diagnosed with active or chronic sacroiliitis based on the sacroiliac MRIs or had their MRI results favoring sacroiliitis as determined by the primary physician. SI joint MRIs were reinterpreted by the expert radiologist. The MRI interpretations of the SI joint have been performed according to the Assessment of SpondyloArthritis International Society (ASAS) criteria for active sacroiliitis.

Ethics Approval

This study was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration. All procedures carried out in this study were approved by Sakarya University Local Ethics Committee on 23.03.2023 (Ethics committee approval no: E-71522473-050.01.04-194674-330). Due to the retrospective nature of the study, informed consent forms were not obtained.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive analyses were conducted to present an overview of the general characteristics of the study population. To assess normal distribution, both visual methods (such as probability plots and histograms) and analytical tests (including the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests) were employed. For continuous variables that exhibited a normal distribution, Student t-test was employed. Conversely, for continuous variables that did not adhere to a normal distribution, Mann-Whitney U test was utilized. Furthermore, categorical data were compared using the Chi-square test. The agreement between the expert and outsourced services was evaluated using Kappa (k) coefficients. To compare evaluation outcomes between two observers, the McNemar test was employed. A p-value of less than 0.05 was deemed statistically significant. All analyses were performed using commercial software (IBM SPSS Statistics, Version 22.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.).

RESULTS

Among the 1150 patients who were subjects of this investigation, 526 (45.7%) were identified as male, while 624 (54.3%) were classified as female. The overall mean age was recorded as 37.20 ± 11.65 years, with the respective mean ages for male and female being 34.98 ± 11.19 and 39.07 ± 11.71 years. Notably, a statistically significant distinction emerged between the evaluations provided by expert radiologist and those of the outsourced radiology reports. This divergence underscores a substantial lack of consensus among the assessors ($p < 0.001$). When scrutinizing the agreement between expert radiologist and outsourced radiologist reports, a noteworthy moderate level of concordance came to light, denoted by a kappa (k) coefficient of 0.589 (Table 1).

Table 1: Comparison of outsourcing and expert radiologist reports

		Outsourcing radiologist reports				
		Not active sacroiliitis	Active sacroiliitis	Total	p	k
Expert radiologist reports	Not active sacroiliitis	508	178	686	<0.001	0.589
	Active sacroiliitis	59	405	464		
Total		567	583	1150		
k: kappa value						

DISCUSSION

AS is a chronic autoimmune disease with an uncertain etiology; nevertheless, inflammation is widely acknowledged to play a significant role in its pathogenesis and progression.¹² Mortality rates in individuals with AS are higher compared to the general population. If patients access treatment late, joint fusion can lead to significant functional impairment. Since achieving clinical remission at high rates is possible with early diagnosis and appropriate treatment, avoiding delays in diagnosis is crucial for the prognosis of the patient.¹³

Teleradiology, a component of telemedicine, encompasses the analysis of diagnostic imaging tests conducted at a location distant from where the images were initially captured.¹⁴ During the 1990s, teleradiology advanced as a technology enabling radiologists to deliver urgent in-house radiology services remotely from their residences. Teleradiology was initially developed with the goal of ensuring that essential healthcare services could be provided across all geographical areas.¹⁵ Teleradiology's evolution aimed to widen healthcare access. From 1994 to 2015, emergency imaging use spiked by 660%, and certain neurovascular exams even surged by 17,000%, due to technology advances and increased clinical use. The yearly teleradiology volume is consistently increasing.^{16,17} Quality standards necessitate that radiologists hold licenses to offer teleradiology services in both the transmitting and receiving facilities in some countries.¹⁸ The utilization of teleradiology through the outsourced model has enhanced the efficiency of healthcare services and facilitated patients' access to healthcare. Subjecting teleradiology and outsourced radiology services to certification will elevate the standards of both service recipients and providers. With the increasing volume of teleradiology in recent years, the time per MRI could decrease. There might be interobserver disagreement in assessing SI joint. The combination of all these factors could negatively impact the quality of healthcare service. Accreditation could be a solution for establishing and monitoring the standards of teleradiology.

The use of artificial intelligence in healthcare and radiology is rapidly increasing. Artificial intelligence has become widespread, especially in radiological imaging with interobserver disagreement. In a study involving 1553 SI joint radiographs, an accuracy rate of over 80% was achieved in predictions.¹⁹

The secondary outcomes of a study involving 328 patients revealed a moderate agreement between two radiologists in sacroiliac joint MRI assessments. Development of sacroiliitis was observed in MRI after an average of 34.8 months. The risk model indicated that the presence of active inflammatory damage or chronic structural damage increases the risk of developing radiologic sacroiliitis in subsequent years.²⁰ The sacroiliac MRIs of 99 patients under the age of ²¹, who were following for sacroiliitis, were interpreted and analyzed by different radiologists. Moderate agreement among the radiologists was observed.²¹ These results are similar to the findings of our study.

We anticipate that in the near future, the use of artificial intelligence techniques will become more prevalent to reduce interobserver disagreement and achieve more precise and accurate results.

CONCLUSION

The diagnosis of spondyloarthropathies may be delayed for some reasons. Given the subtle progression of the disease, we underscore the significance of jointly assessing the patient's sacroiliac MRI report alongside their clinical findings. If the patient's clinic and MRI report are not consistent, the patient should not be removed from follow-up.

Limitations

The limitations of the study include its retrospective design, and the comparison of radiology interpretations solely by a single expert radiologist.

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The Author Contribution:

Study Design: ACG, ABK, FTG, YG, EG; Data Collection: ACG, ABK, FTG, ZÖ, DK, AT, ÜE, YG, EG; Statistical Analysis: ACG, ÜE; Manuscript Preparation: ACG, FTG.

Ethics Approval

All procedures in this study were approved by the Sakarya University Local Ethics Committee on 23.03.2023 (Ethics committee approval no: E-71522473-050.01.04-194674-330). This study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

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De novo extended-release Tacrolimus in Kidney Transplant Patients; Is it safe?

Böbrek Nakli Hastalarında De novo uzatılmış salımlı Takrolimus; Güvenli mi?

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Abstract

Introduction This study aimed to investigate whether de novo extended-release tacrolimus therapy is safe in kidney recipients.

Materials and Methods The study was single-center, retrospective, and included a total of 57 patients, including 30 patients in the extended-release tacrolimus group (Group 1) and 27 patients in the immediate-release tacrolimus group (Group 2). Demographic and laboratory characteristics of the patients were recorded. Complications such as acute drug toxicity, acute rejection, new-onset diabetes mellitus after transplantation, and development of hypertension, opportunistic infection, and hospitalization data were recorded.

Results The mean age of the patients was 46.23±14.2 years in group 1 and 47.04±14.6 years in group 2. There were 21 (70%) males in group 1, while 20 (74%) patients in group 2 had a male gender (P=0.73). The rate of improved serum creatinine values in the first week postoperatively was similar in both groups. While the mean tacrolimus levels on postoperative day 1 were significantly lower in group- 1 (P<0.05), there was no significant difference between tacrolimus levels on postoperative days 2-7. There was no significant difference between the groups regarding opportunistic infections, diabetes mellitus, and the need for hospitalization in the first six months of follow-up.

Conclusion Initiation of de novo extended-release tacrolimus therapy in kidney recipients is safe in the long term and preserves graft function.

Keywords Kidney transplantation, extended-release tacrolimus, immediate-release tacrolimus, graft function.

Öz

Amaç Bu çalışmada, böbrek alıcılarında de novo uzatılmış salımlı takrolimus tedavisinin güvenli olup olmadığını araştırmayı amaçlandı.

Yöntem ve Gereçler Çalışma tek merkezli, retrospektif olup, uzatılmış salımlı takrolimus grubunda 30 hasta (Grup 1) ve hızlı salımlı takrolimus grubunda 27 hasta (Grup 2) olmak üzere toplam 57 hastayı içermektedir. Hastaların demografik ve laboratuvar özellikleri kaydedildi. Akut ilaç toksisitesi, akut rejeksiyon, nakil sonrası yeni başlayan diyabet, hipertansiyon gelişimi, fırsatçı enfeksiyon gibi komplikasyonlar ile hastaneye yatış verileri kaydedildi.

Bulgular Hastaların yaş ortalaması grup 1'de 46,23±14,2 yıl, grup 2'de 47,04±14,6 yıl idi. Grup 1'de 21 (%70) erkek hasta bulunurken, grup 2'de 20 (%74) hasta erkek idi (P=0,73). Ameliyat sonrası ilk haftada serum kreatinin değerlerinde iyileşme oranı her iki grupta da benzerdi. Ameliyat sonrası 1. gün ortalama takrolimus düzeyleri grup 1'de anlamlı derecede düşük iken (P<0,05), ameliyat sonrası 2-7. günler arasındaki takrolimus düzeyleri arasında anlamlı fark yoktu. İlk altı aylık takipte fırsatçı enfeksiyon, diyabet ve hastaneye yatış ihtiyacı açısından gruplar arasında anlamlı fark yoktu.

Sonuç Böbrek alıcılarında de novo uzatılmış salımlı takrolimus tedavisine başlanması uzun vadede güvenlidir ve greft fonksiyonunu yönünden güvenli bir seçenektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler Böbrek nakli, uzatılmış salımlı takrolimus, hızlı salımlı takrolimus, greft fonksiyonu.



INTRODUCTION

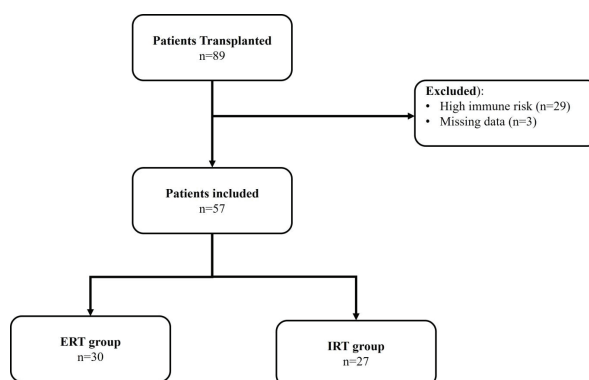
Kidney transplantation is still the best renal replacement therapy option that significantly improves patient survival and quality of life.¹ After transplantation, patients have to take regular immunosuppressive drugs to prevent graft loss in the long term. Calcineurin inhibitors are indispensable drugs used in solid organ transplants.² Immediate-release tacrolimus (IRT) has been shown to significantly reduce acute rejection rates, resulting in successful kidney transplantation in the short term and, thus, considerably improving graft and patient survival.³ In recent years, long-release tacrolimus (ERT) therapy, which allows once-daily use, is safe with pharmacokinetic and efficacy studies.⁴ Noncompliance is one of the more critical risk factors for kidney graft loss over the long term. A meta-analysis that investigated nonadherence in kidney transplant recipients showed that the odds of graft failure increased sevenfold (95% confidence interval, 4%–12%) in non-adherent patients compared with adherent patients.⁵ In addition, using de novo ERT in renal recipients may reduce non-adherence events, especially in the long term. This study aimed to investigate the efficacy of de novo extended-release tacrolimus versus immediate-release tacrolimus therapy in kidney recipients.

MATERIAL and METHODS

Patients who underwent kidney transplants between May 2019 and March 2022 were evaluated retrospectively. Ethical approval of the study was obtained from the Sakarya University Ethics Committee (no: E-71522473-050.01.04.146272-192). All patients received steroid and anti-thymocyte globulin (ATG) as induction therapy, followed by a maintenance immunosuppressive therapy consisting of prednisone, tacrolimus, and mycophenolate mofetil. We included 57 patients, 30 in the ERT (Group 1) and 27 in the IRT (Group 2) group as shown in figure 1. Demographic and laboratory characteristics of the patients were recorded. Both types of tacrolimus drugs were started at a dose of 0.15 mg/kg/day on the day of the operation, and necessary dose changes were made

so that the target serum level for both drugs was between 8-10 ng/mL. Cadaveric transplants, patients under 18 years of age, patients who underwent different immunosuppressive therapy protocols, patients with high immune risk, patients with active malignancies, and patients using drugs interacting with tacrolimus were not included in the study. Patients' information on dialysis duration, primary disease, presence of comorbid disease, hospitalization time, graft functions, tacrolimus blood levels, acute drug toxicity, acute rejection, new-onset diabetes mellitus after transplantation (NODAT), development of hypertension, opportunistic infection, and hospitalization was recorded. All results were evaluated in the first 6 months.

Figure 1: Flowchart of the study population



Abbreviations: ERT: extended-release tacrolimus, IRT: intermittent-release tacrolimu

Statistical analysis

SPSS version 26.0 software was used for statistical analysis (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). Mean, standard deviation, number, and percentage values were used for descriptive variables, and median and interquartile range values were used for data showing non-parametric distribution. Whether the numerical variables showed normal distribution or not was evaluated with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Independent samples t-test was used for independent groups in comparing two normally distributed groups, and the Mann-Whitney U test was used in comparing the two groups in terms of normally distributed numerical variables. Statistical significance was accepted as $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

The mean age of patients in was 46.23±14.2 years and 47.04±14.6 years in ERT and IRT groups, respectively. 70% (n=21) of the ERT group were male versus 74 % (n=20) in the IRT group (P=0.73). The number of preemptive transplants was similar (n=18) in both groups (Table 1).

Characteristics	ERT Group, no=30	IRT Group, no=27	P
Age (year)*	46.23±14.2	47.04±14.6	0.917
Sex M/F, No (%)	21(9%)	20 (7%)	0.733
BMI, kg/m2*	23.9±4.7	24.2±6.4	0.786
Type of transplantation, no, %			0.460
Preemptive	18 (60)	18 (66.7)	
After Dialysis	12 (40)	9 (33,30)	
Pre-transplant dialysis duration, month, %	9.0 (20.7)	10.8 (34.8)	0.870
Primary Disease, no, %			0.107
Diabetes Mellitus	8 (26.7)	2 (7.4)	
Hypertension	4 (13.3)	4 (14.8)	
Chronic glomerulonephritis	9 (30)	8 (29.6)	
Polycystic kidney Disease	2 (6.7)	5 (18.5)	
Other	7 (23.3)	8 (29.6)	
Pretransplant residual urine, ml/day*	1437±1217	1555±1072	0.785
HLA mismatch (median)	3 (1-5)	3 (1-6)	0.5
Cumulative total ATG dose, mg*	391.7±194.3	534.5±350.9	0.262
Abbreviations: ATG: Anti-thymocyte globulin, ERT: Extended-release tacrolimus, IRT: immediate release tacrolimus, M: male, F: female, BMI: body mass index, HLA: human leucocyte antigen, * Shown as mean±SD			

The difference between the two groups in terms of primary disease, HLA miss-match, and cumulative ATG induction treatment was not significant (P>0.05) (Table 1). Both groups had similar rates of improvement in serum creatinine values in the first week after transplantation. Tacrolimus levels were significantly lower in the ERT group on the first postoperative day, but there was no difference between the two groups on the subsequent days. Additionally, there were no appreciable differences between the

groups in terms of opportunistic infections, NODAT, or the requirement for hospitalization in the initial six months of follow-up. Although the ERT group experienced a greater rate (1.8 times) of acute rejection than the IRT group (26.6% vs. 14.8%). This difference was not statistically significant (p=0.273) (Table 2).

Characteristics	ERT Group, no=30	IRT Group, no=27	P
Basal serum Creatinine, mg/dl	6.48±1.61	6.39±1.52	0.773
1st day Creatinine, mg/dl	3.21±1.98	2.83±1.26	0.492
2nd day Creatinine, mg/dl	2.11±2.23	1.71±1.41	0.329
3rd day Creatinine, mg/dl	1.85±2.02	1.39±0.97	0.306
5th day Creatinine, mg/dl	1.58±1.39	1.19±0.59	0.125
7th day Creatinine, mg/dl	1.41±0.78	1.35±1.03	0.357
1st month Creatinine, mg/dl	1.24±0.23	1.21±0.37	0.517
3rd month Creatinine, mg/dl	1.22±0.24	1.18±0.38	0.370
6th month serum Creatinine, mg/dl	1.24±0.33	1.14±0.27	0.447
1st day Tacrolimus ng/mL	5.5 (1.4-30)	7.3 (4.1-36)	0.040
3rd day Tacrolimus ng/mL	8.6 (2.4-21)	8.4(4.3-21)	0.672
5th day Tacrolimus ng/mL	8 (3.2-19)	8.5 (4.6-15)	0.362
7th day Tacrolimus ng/mL	7.9 (2.7-16.7)	8.5 (1.8-14)	0.299
BK nephropathy, no, %	1 (3.33)	2 (7.40)	0.492
CMV infection, n, %	1 (3.33)	0 (0)	0.339
NODAT, n, %	0 (0)	1 (3.7)	0.288
Re-hospitalization, n, %	12 (40)	13 (48.1)	0.536
Biopsy proven acute rejection, n, %	8 (26.6)	4 (14.8)	0.273
Abbreviations: CMV: Cytomegalovirus, ERT: Extended-release tacrolimus, IRT: immediate release tacrolimus NODAT: New onset diabetes mellitus after transplantation			

DISCUSSION

In this study, we found that de novo ERT can be used safely and effectively in living donor kidney recipients without considerable immunological risk. Similar cumulative steroid and ATG doses were administered to both groups. In the postoperative follow-up, the rates of graft function improvement and hospital stay were comparable between

en the two groups. ERT's excellent benefits for transplant recipients' quality of life and facilitate treatment adherence. In the systemic review, de novo ERT compared to IRT showed similar posttransplant 6-month graft survival rates in deceased and living kidney transplant recipients.⁶ In Our study conducted only on living kidney recipients, we found similar 6-month graft function results. ERT generally requires higher daily dosages than IRT to achieve the target through blood levels, at least in de novo use from the first day of kidney transplantation. However, similar blood concentrations are achieved in ERT and IRT 3 days after starting treatment.⁷ In our study, however, we used the same dose per kilogram (0.15 mg/kg/day) from baseline for both drug forms and tacrolimus levels measured every other day for one week post-transplant were similar in both groups except day one only. Regarding pharmacokinetic properties, tacrolimus blood level shows high intra- and inter-patient variability. The balance between effective tacrolimus concentrations and toxicity is difficult to find, and close monitoring is required in the first days after transplantation to adjust the level of the drug therapeutically.⁸ The patients who received ERT had a broader range of tacrolimus level values on their first day than the patients who received IRT. The results were noticeably different between the two groups. However, both groups' tacrolimus blood levels in the following days were comparable. We made the necessary dose modifications to reach the targeted drug level in both patient groups. The similarity between the two groups may be because we made fewer dose adjustments, and the drug levels were evaluated every other day rather than daily. In addition, this may have reduced the frequency of drug variability. The advantages of switching to ERT in adherence to an immunosuppressed regimen in liver transplant patients have been demonstrated.⁹ The immunosuppressive regimen in kidney transplant patients requires multiple drugs, A Swedish study evaluating compliance with ERT and IRT regimens reported no significant difference between the two groups in the 12-month evaluation¹⁰. Fluctuations in tacrolimus drug concentrations can occur due to delayed or missed

doses, which can lead to rejection.¹¹ Most patients prefer to eliminate evening doses of immunosuppressive therapy, with ERT being associated with improved quality of life compared to IRT and adherence to immunosuppressive therapy.¹² The meta-analysis showed that the studies performed mostly had short-term results of 6 and 12 months and that there was no significant difference between the two groups.¹³ Beyond our expectations, patients receiving ERT had a higher rejection rate than patients receiving IRT, but the results were not statistically significant. This should not be misinterpreted and should not be generalized to all transplanted patients.. Tacrolimus causes glucose metabolism disorder as a side effect and thus may cause diabetes⁶. During the specified follow-up period, diabetes mellitus was observed in 1 patient in the ERT group. There was no statistical difference between the two groups regarding drug-induced diabetes mellitus. Post-transplant infections can impact graft and patient survival, and infectious complications can cause significant morbidity and require hospitalization and follow-up of patients⁷. There was no significant difference between the two groups regarding post-discharge hospitalization, BK nephropathy, and CMV infection.

Our study has some limitations. First, it is retrospective and included a small number of matched patients in both arms. As a low-volume single renal transplant center, we had few eligible patients compliant with the inclusion criteria within the time frame of the study.

In conclusion, de novo ERT was found to be as safe and as effective as IRT in kidney transplant recipients. Nonadherence to medications has multiple reasons, but the increased frequency of administration of medications constitutes the most important one. Therefore, the improved convenience of less frequent administration would be expected to improve adherence and, consequently, increase graft survival. De novo ERT drug level monitoring every other day rather than daily may prevent rapid dose changes and variability of drug levels. Initiating de novo ERT therapy

in kidney recipients is safe in the long term and preserves graft function. Randomized prospective studies with higher numbers will contribute to a better clarification of this issue.

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Declaration of Competing Interest:

All authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships related to any content in this manuscript.

Authorship contribution statement:

Coconceptualization: HD, Mİ. Methodology: HD, Mİ, NE. Data collection: HD, Mİ, NE, ES, ZE, GÇÇ, MP. Data analysis and interpretation: Mİ, ES. Preparation of first draft: HD, Mİ. Review and editing: HD, Mİ, NE, ES, ZE, GÇÇ, MP, KEÖ. Supervision: HD.

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