



Prognostic Significance of Monocyte to High-density Lipoprotein Ratio in Patients With Chronic Coronary Artery Occlusion

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Abstract

Objective: Monocyte to high-density lipoprotein ratio (MHR) is a biomarker of inflammatory response. In this study, we investigated the relationship between MHR and mortality in patients with chronic coronary artery occlusion (CTO).

Method: Retrospective observational study including 493 patients over a follow up period of 73 months. Blood samples were taken before cardiac catheterization for coronary angiography.

Results: Median follow-up was 48 months (26-73). Patients were separated into two groups: (I) MHR <17.68 (n=278, 95 females) and (II) MHR ≥17.68 (n=215, 45 females). Mortality was considerably higher in MHR II than in MHR I (n=70 vs. n=43; p<0,001). MHR was an independent predictor of mortality (OR: 1.089, 95% [CI]: 1.055-1.124, p<0,001). Lower survival rates were found in MHR II on Kaplan-Meier analyses when compared to that of MHR I (75.223±2.670 vs. 89.220±2.102, p<0,001).

Conclusions: As a simple, easy applicable and universal marker, MHR may be a parameter that predicts mortality risk and survival time in CTO patients.

Keywords: Prognosis, inflammation, mortality, atherosclerosis

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Monosit/HDL Değerinin Koroner Kronik Total Oklüzyon Hastalarında Prognostik önemi

Öz

Amaç: Kronik total oklüzyon (KTO) gelişimi her aşaması farklı histopatolojik özellikler içeren çok sayıda histolojik evrelerden oluşur. Monosit/HDL oranı (MHO) inflamatuvar yanıtın derecesini gösteren faydalı bir parametredir. KTO hastalarında MHO'nun sağkalım süresi ve uzun dönem mortalite üzerine etkisini araştırdık.

Yöntemler: 2011 Ocak ile 2019 Aralık arasında 73 aya kadar takibi yapılan 493 KTO hastası çalışmaya alındı. Periprosedüral kan örneklerinden MHO hesaplanıp detaylı klinik data elde edildi.

Bulgular: Medyan takip süresi 48 ay olup hastalar MHO değerine göre MHO I <17.68 (N:278, 95 kadın) ve MHO II ≥17.68 (N:215, 45 kadın) olacak şekilde iki gruba ayrıldı. Mortalite MHO II grubunda MHO grup I'e göre belirgin olarak daha fazla bulundu (n=70 vs. n=43; p<0,001). MHO değeri mortalitenin bağımsız öngördürücüsü olarak bulundu (OR: 1.089, 95% [CI]: 1.055-1.124, p<0,001). Kaplan-Meier analizinde MHO II grubunda daha düşük sağkalım süresi tespit edildi (75.223±2.670 vs. 89.220±2.102, p<0,001).

Sonuç: KTO hastalarında basit, kolay uygulanabilir, evrensel bir marker olarak MHO, mortalite riski ve sağkalım süresini öngördüren bir parametre olabilir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Prognoz, enflamasyon, mortalite, ateroskleroz.

INTRODUCTION

Chronic total occlusion (CTO) is defined as occlusion of a coronary artery for more than three months period. CTO is a clinical condition commonly detected during routine angiography and has a prevalence of 18-52%¹⁻³. According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Dynamic Registry, CTO is most commonly seen in the right coronary artery and least commonly in the circumflex artery. The incidence of CTO increases with age, with a reported incidence of 37% in patients aged less than 65 years, 40% in patients aged between 65-79 years, and 41% in patients aged over 85 years⁴.

The development of CTO consists of multiple histological stages, with distinct histopathological features for each stage. In most cases, CTO is triggered by thrombus caused by sudden rupture of an atherosclerotic plaque⁵. The progression of coronary artery disease (CAD) and its evolution to a CTO lesion is caused by numerous conditions such as immunological upregulation, inflammatory indicators (cytokines, leukocytes, C-reactive

protein [CRP]), endothelial dysfunction, and cholesterol saving.

Monocytes have a basic part in the early phase of atherosclerosis⁶. These cells bind to adhesion particles expressed on injured endothelial cells through immune-mediated mechanisms⁷. Subsequently, they transmigrate to the subendothelial area and convert into macrophages and thereby internalize oxidized low-density lipoprotein (LDL) and class A scavenger receptors⁸. Afterwards, they convert into foam cells, thereby causing the release of proinflammatory and prooxidant cytokines⁹. Unlike monocytes, high-density lipoprotein (HDL) is a heterogeneous lipid and protein particle which has been displayed to have antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-apoptotic, anti-thrombotic and anti-atherosclerotic properties¹⁰⁻¹¹.

Various parameters can be used to show the burden of coronary artery disease¹². The monocyte to HDL ratio (MHR) has recently emerged as a novel, inexpensive, and accessible marker of inflammation and oxidative effect. MHR has also been associated with adverse cardiac outcomes in patients with acute

myocardial infarction (AMI)¹³, stable angina pectoris (SAP)¹⁴, atrial fibrillation (AF)¹⁵, coronary slow-flow phenomenon (CSFP)¹⁶, rheumatic mitral stenosis (RMS)¹⁷, and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM)¹⁸.

To the best of our knowledge, there is no study in the literature reporting on a direct relationship between MHR and mortality in CTO patients. The objective of this study was to explore the relationship between MHR and mortality in CTO patients.

METHOD

Research design

The research was planned as an observational, retrospective and included cases that had a diagnosis of SAP, unstable angina pectoris (USAP), non-ST-elevated myocardial infarction (NSTEMI), and ST-elevated myocardial infarction (STEMI) or asymptomatic patients that were incidentally diagnosed with CTO during a routine angiography prior to cardiovascular surgery between the calendar years of 2011 and 2019. Cases with hematological disorders, inflammatory disorders, malignancies, infections, chronic liver or kidney disorder, autoimmune disorders, and a CTO vessel diameter <2 mm were excluded from the study. The study protocol was validated by the local ethics committee. The study was approved by the ethics committee of our hospital on 7.1.2021. The reference number of research is 81.

Definitions

Chronic total occlusion (CTO) was described as a coronary occlusion with TIMI (thrombolysis in myocardial infarction) grade 0 flow for at least three months. During admission, a detailed medical history including cardiovascular risk factors was obtained from each patient. Hypertension (HT) was accepted as either systolic blood pressure (SBP) ≥ 140 mmHg or diastolic blood pressure (DBP) ≥ 90 mm Hg on two different measurements or taking anti-

hypertensive therapy. Diabetes mellitus (DM) was described as a fasting glucose level ≥ 126 mg/dL on two different evaluation or taking antidiabetic medication. Dyslipidemia was defined as a total cholesterol of ≥ 200 mg/dl. Current smoking was defined as smoker. Positive family history was accepted as the history of a cardiovascular event in first-degree family members before age 55 in males and before age 65 in females. Cerebral hemorrhage and ischemic stroke were defined as cerebrovascular events. Chronic kidney disease was defined as having a glomerular filtration rate (GFR) of lower than 60 ml/min/1.73 m² over a date of more than three months with no renal impairment or as a structural and functional disorder in the kidney lasting for more than three months regardless of a decrease in GFR.

Biochemical and Hematological parameters

Laboratory analysis were performed on the blood specimens taken from patients instantly before coronary angiography. Blood samples were analyzed using a hematological apparatus (Abbott Cell-Dyn 3700; Illinois, USA). Laboratory analyses were performed using routine methods and MHR was calculated for each patient.

Follow-up

The survival time was defined as the period from initial admission to our hospital for angiography to demise of patient. Data on patients' death were accessed by telephone interviews or were retrieved from the state's registration records.

Statistical process

SPSS for Windows was utilized for data analyses (version 25.0, Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.). Normality of dispersion was assessed with Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Categorical variables were stated as percentages (%) and were matched using Chi-square test. Continuous variables with normal dispersion were reported

as mean ± standard deviation (SD) and group differences were analyzed using Student's t-test. Continuous factors with non-normal distribution were reported as median (25th-75th percentile) and group differences were analyzed using Mann-Whitney U. Independent predictors of mortality were described using univariate and multivariate logistic regression analysis and only with a p value <0.05 were included in the multivariate analysis. The results were reported as odds ratio (OR) and 95% confidence interval (CI). The optimum MHR cut-off for the mortality prediction was established utilizing receiver operating characteristic (ROC) analysis. Correlations were investigated using Spearman's correlation coefficient. Survival analyses were carried out using Kaplan-Meier analysis. A p value of <0.05 was designated as statistical significance cut off.

RESULTS

353 (71.6%) men and 140 (28.4%) women were included with an average age of 63.03±10.88 years. Median follow-up period was 48 months (interquartile range [IQR]: 26-73). Patients were separated into two groups: (I) MHR <17.68 (n=278) and (II) MHR ≥17.68 (n=215). Table 1 presents the demographic and clinical characteristics of patients in both groups. Out of all patients, 254 (51.5%) underwent percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), 104 (21.1%) underwent medical treatment alone, 61 (12.4%) had a failed CTO intervention, and 74 (15%) underwent coronary artery bypass grafting. A statistically significant difference was found between the two groups in variables including gender, mortality, smoking status, and clinical symptomatology (p=0.001, p<0.001, p=0.006, and p=0.035, respectively). Table 2 presents the hematological and biochemical parameters for both groups. White blood cell (WBC), red cell distribution width (RDW), lymphocyte, monocyte, and neutrophil counts, urea, creatinine, and total cholesterol were

significantly higher and HDL level was considerably lower in MHR I (MHR <17.68) compared to MHR II.

Table I: Clinical characteristics of the patients

	Total N=493	MHR <17,68 N=278	MHR ≥17,68 N=215	P value
Age (Years)	63.03±10.88	63.33±10.79	62.65±11.00	0.490*
Follow-up time (Months)	48 (26-73)	48,5 (27,75-70,25)	48 (22-76)	0.891
Male gender	353 (71.6%)	183 (65.8%)	170 (79.1%)	0,001
Mortality	113 (22.9%)	43 (15.5%)	70 (32.6%)	<0.001
Hypertension	172 (34.9%)	90 (32.4%)	82 (38.1%)	0.183
Diabetes mellitus	143 (29%)	73 (26.3%)	70 (32.6%)	0.126
Hyperlipidaemia	31 (6.3%)	14 (5%)	17 (7.9%)	0.193
Smoker	132 (26.8%)	61 (21.9%)	71 (33%)	0.006
Chronic renal disease	27 (5.5%)	12 (4.3%)	15 (7%)	0.198
Family history	28 (5.7%)	15 (5.4%)	13 (6%)	0.757
Cerebrovascular events	13 (2.6%)	6 (2.2%)	7 (3.3%)	0.451
LVEF	50 (40-60)	55 (45-60)	50 (40-60)	0.016
Symptomatology				
Asymptomatic	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.4%)	0	
SAP	230 (46.7%)	144 (51.8%)	86 (40%)	
USAP	120 (24.3%)	65 (23.4%)	55 (25.6%)	0.035**
NSTEMI	126 (25.6%)	58 (20.9%)	68 (31.6%)	
STEMI	16 (3.2%)	10 (3.6%)	16 (3.2%)	
Clinical approach				
Medical treatment	104 (21.1%)	54 (19.4%)	50 (23.3%)	
PCI	254 (51.5%)	152 (54.7%)	102 (47.4%)	0.454**
Failed CTO intervention	61 (12.4%)	32 (11.5%)	29 (13.5%)	
CABG	74 (15%)	40 (14.4%)	34 (15.8%)	

Data are expressed as mean ± SD, number (percentage) or median (interquartile range) as appropriate. *Independent Samples t Test. **Chi Square Test. CABG: coronary artery bypass graft, CTO: chronic total occlusion, LVEF: left ventricle ejection fraction, NSTEMI: non-ST elevated myocardial infarction, PCI: percutaneous coronary intervention, SAP: stable angina pectoris, STEMI: ST elevated myocardial infarction, USAP: unstable angina pectoris.

Table II: Baseline haematological and biochemical parameters of the patients

	Total N=493	MHR <17,68 N=278	MHR ≥17,68 N=215	P value
White blood cell count ($\times 10^3$ μ L)	8.75 (7.35-10.79)	7.81 (6.6-9.55)	10.19 (8.63-1.,7)	<0.001
Hemoglobin (g/dl)	13.80 (12.45-15)	13.70 (12.50-14.80)	13.90 (12.40-15.30)	0.287
Hematocrit (%)	41.21±5.54	41.10±5.36	41.35±5.78	0.619*
RDW (%)	12.4 (11.7-15.2)	12.2 (11.6-14.72)	13.92 (11.8-16)	0.003
Platelets ($\times 10^3$ μ L)	240 (201-291)	240 (202-291)	240 (198-293)	0.873
Lymphocytes ($\times 10^3$ μ L)	1.87 (1.64-2.72)	1.99 (1.54-2.49)	2.41 (1.74-3)	<0.001
Monocytes ($\times 10^9$ L)	640 (499-791)	521 (430-623)	817 (690-951)	<0.001
Neutrophils ($\times 10^3$ μ L)	6.14 (4.37-7.08)	4.84 (3.89-6.31)	6.26 (5.15-8)	<0.001
eGFR (ml/min/1,73m ²)	75 (70-101)	88 (72-101)	84 (67-100)	0.346
Glucose (mg/dl)	126 (95-165)	119 (94-167)	113 (97-165)	0.891
Urea(mg/dl)	48 (30-49)	37 (29,7-48,2)	40 (31-51)	0.011
Creatine (mg/dl)	0.97 (0.77-1.05)	0.84 (0.76-1.02)	0.89 (0.77-1.11)	0.044
Sodium (mmol/L)	137 (135-139)	138 (136-139)	137 (135-139)	0.092
Potassium (mmol/L)	4.4 (4-4.7)	4.4 (4.1-4.8)	4.4 (4-4.7)	0.331
Lactate dehydrogenase (U/L)	259 (188-319)	226,5 (188-309)	239 (190-346)	0.206
Serum albumin (g/dl)	3.3 (3.3-3.9)	3.7 (3.4-3.9)	3.6 (3.2-3.9)	0.144
Total cholesterol (mg/dl)	164 (146-210)	178,5 (149-217)	169 (141-199)	0.004
Triglycerides (mg/dl)	122 (101-214)	143,5 (98-210)	154 (104-219)	0.371
LDL (mg/dl)	100 (77-132)	103 (78-136)	99 (77-125)	0.198
HDL (mg/dl)	34 (32-44)	42 (35-47)	34 (29-38)	<0.001
NLR	3.13 (1.82-3.69)	2.52 (1.82-3.46)	2.51 (1.82-3.98)	0.267

Data are expressed as mean \pm SD and median (interquartile range) as appropriate. *Independent Samples t Test. eGFR: estimated glomerular filtration rate, HDL: high density lipoprotein LDL: low density lipoprotein, NLR: neutrophil to lymphocyte ratio. MHR: monocyte to high density lipoprotein ratio, RDW: red cell distribution width.

On multivariate logistic regression analysis, MHR, albumin, and age were detected to be independent predictors of long-term mortality (OR: 1.091, 95% CI: 1.058-1.126, p <0.001, OR: 0.318, 95% CI: 0.176-0.573, p <0,001, OR: 1.048, 95% CI: 1.023-1.075, p <0.001, respectively; Table 3). MHR \geq 17.68 determined mortality in CTO patients with a sensitivity of 61% and

specificity of 62% ([AUC]: 0.679, 95% CI: 0.623-0.735; Figure 1). Positive correlation was found among MHR and the neutrophil-to-lymphocyte ratio (NLR) (r =0.103, p =0.22; Figure 2). The Kaplan-Meier analysis indicated higher surveillance in group I (MHR <17.68) (p <0.001; Figure 3).

Table III: Predictors of mortality in univariate and multivariate logistic regression analysis

	Univariate analysis			Multivariate analysis		
	OR	95% CI	P value	OR	95% CI	P value
Hypertension	1.699	1.101-2.620	0.017	1.094	0.659-1.818	0.728
Diabetes mellitus	1.382	0.879-2.174	0.161			
Hyperlipidaemia	0.490	0.169-1.442	0.197			
MHR	1.093	1.064-1.123	<0.001	1.091	1.058-1.126	<0.001
Hemoglobin	0.786	0.702-0.881	<0.001	0.926	0.801-1.072	0.304
Platelet	0.999	0.996-1.002	0.459			
Glucose	1.002	0.999-1	0.174			
Serum albumin	0.171	0.103-0.283	<0.001	0.318	0.176-0.573	<0.001
Total cholesterol	0.994	0.989-0.999	0.013	1	0.994-1.005	0.876
NLR	1.154	1.068-1.248	<0.001	1.070	0.974-1.175	0.160
Age	1.065	1.042-1.089	<0.001	1.048	1.023-1.075	<0.001
Gender	0.879	0.545-1.418	0.597			

CI: confident interval, MHR: monocyte to high density lipoprotein ratio, NLR: neutrophil to lymphocyte ratio, OR: odds ratio.

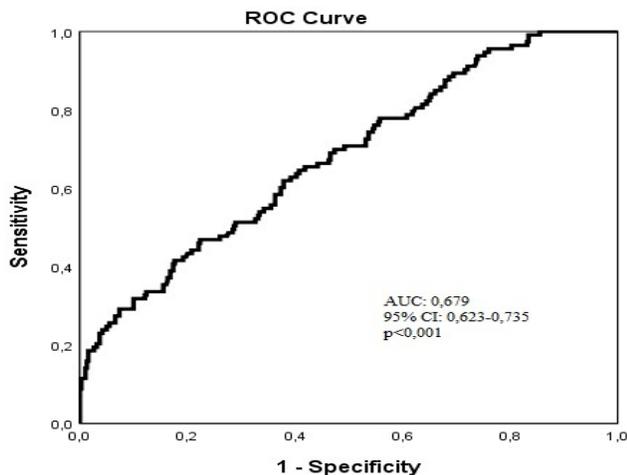


Figure 1. Receiver-operating characteristic (ROC) curve for preprocedural monocyte count to high density lipoprotein ratio for predicting mortality on patients with chronic total occlusions. AUC: Area under the curve, CI: confident interval.

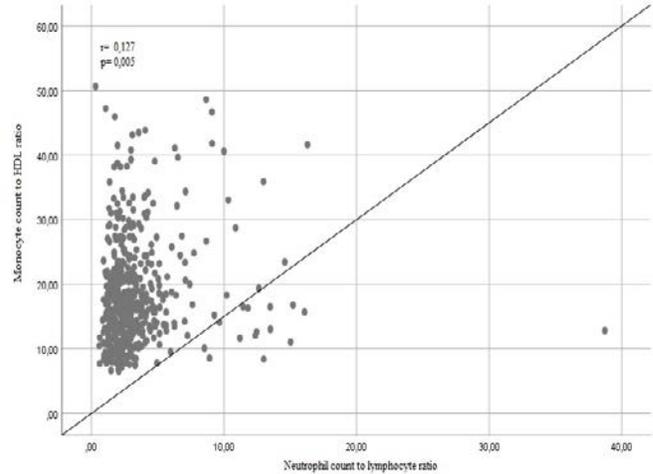


Figure 2. Correlation analysis of monocyte to high-density lipoprotein ratio with neutrophil count to lymphocyte ratio level

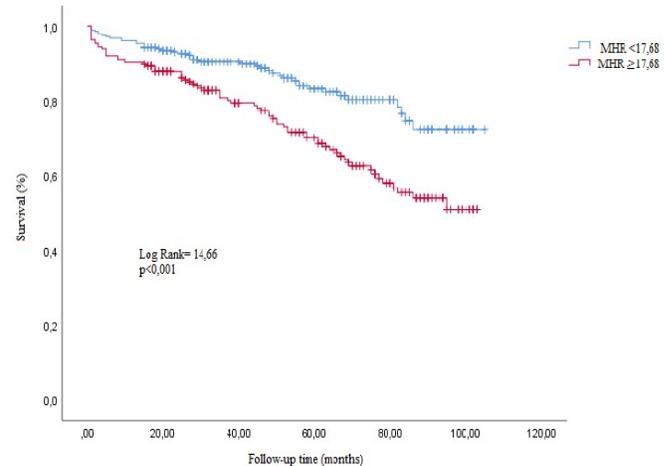


Figure 3. Kaplan-Meier survival analysis. During long-term follow-up (median 48 months) period patients group with MHR $\geq 17,68$ had significantly worse survival than patients group with MHR $< 17,68$ ($p < 0,001$). Mean survival time MHR $< 17,68$ and MHR $\geq 17,68$ ($89,220 \pm 2,102$; $75,223 \pm 2,670$, $p < 0,001$) respectively.

DISCUSSION

In addition to risk models used in mortality prediction, practical, low-cost, and reliable novel markers are needed and could be beneficial in terms of treatment management and prognostication. The present study aimed to investigate whether a simple and easily calculated parameter such as MHR could be used in predicting mortality and survival in

CTO. Our results indicate that increased MHR is associated with mortality and survival rate decreases as MHR value increases. Additionally, MHR has been shown to be a predictor of mortality.

High MHR has been reported to be a risk element for CTO in CAD cases¹⁹. A recent study indicated that MHR predicted mortality in patients with ischemic stroke²⁰. Similarly, Efe et al. showed the prognostic importance of MHR in predicting early mortality in acute pulmonary embolism patients²¹. Another study reported that MHR predicted adverse cardiac outcomes in HCM patients¹⁸. The aforementioned study, as in our current study, found higher WBC, neutrophil, and lymphocyte levels to be associated with advanced MHR values. In a similar way, Wu et al. suggested that MHR could be a long-term prognostic marker in CAD patients undergoing PCI²². Unlike the study by Wu et al., our study included CTO patients only and along with the treatment modalities other than PCI such as coronary artery bypass grafting, medical treatment, and failed CTO intervention.

The mechanism of the relationship between MHR and poor prognosis in CTO patients remains unclear. Monocytes have a key role in atherosclerosis development⁶. These cells bind to adhesion molecules expressed on damaged endothelial cells⁷. Subsequently, they transmigrate to the subendothelial area and convert into macrophages and thereby internalize oxidized LDL and class A scavenger receptors⁸. Afterwards, they convert into foam cells, thereby causing the release of proinflammatory and prooxidant cytokines⁹. In recent studies, HDL has been shown to act in the opposite direction in the development of atherosclerosis and to play a main role in monocyte activation, adhesion, and inflammation and further to act as a natural protective barrier against the proinflammatory

effects of monocytes by taking part in the control of the reproduction of progenitor cells that distinguish into monocytes²³⁻²⁵. Low HDL value and high monocyte count appear to be indirect indicators of inflammation. Accordingly, using these two parameters in combination by calculating their ratios to each other provides more precious knowledge about the presence of inflammation and oxidation balance. On the other hand, heart failure could be a reason for the relationship between high MHR and poor prognosis in CTO patients. Wrigley et al. indicated that the monocyte count raised in cases with acute and stable heart failure²⁶. In this study, in line with the literature, a significant correlation was found between higher MHR value and lower ejection fraction. Additionally, we suggest that cardiac arrhythmia could be a reason for the relationship between MHR and poor prognosis in CTO patients¹⁸.

One of the important parameters predicting clinical outcomes in CTO patients is NLR. In a study by Li et al., it has been shown that higher NLR levels were associated with adverse cardiac events in the CTO patient population²⁷. This study was conducted in a homogeneous patient population with stable coronary disease. However, our study was conducted in a wide spectrum cohort which ranges from stable coronary artery disease to acute coronary syndromes. Similar to this study, NLR is one of the independent predictor parameter of all-cause mortality in CTO patients.

Both the studies above mentioned and our study found an association between high MHR value and mortality, which implicates that MHR could be a predictor of unfavorable cardiac consequences in high-risk cases. We also found that MHR could be a novel marker in addition to conventional parameters for the prediction of mortality in CTO patients.

Study Limitations

The main limitation of this study is single center retrospective study design with a limited number of patients. Second, the calculation of MHR was performed from the single blood sample taken prior to the procedure and the MHR value could have varied if it had been calculated from multiple blood samples. Another important limitation was that the study was conducted on a heterogeneous patient population. By various clinical status that may affect the MHR, planning a study with a more homogeneous patient population will yield more valuable results in terms of clinical outcomes. Finally, inflammatory markers including interleukin-6, thromboxane A2, and C-reactive protein (CRP) were not studied, and a correlation analysis was performed with NLR only.

CONCLUSION

Increased MHR (≥ 17.68) is associated with increased mortality and poor survival in CTO patients. Accordingly, MHR could be used as a practical biomarker for survival of CTO patients.

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Ethics Committee Approval: The study protocol was validated by the local ethics committee. The study was approved by the ethics committee of our hospital on 7.1.2021. The reference number of research is 81.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declared no conflicts of interest.

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