Author's response to reviews

Title: Prevalence of Celiac Disease in Multiple Sclerosis

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

First at all, we would like to state that all the authors have contributed actively to the development of this paper and that they all agree on all the presented data. We also declare we don’t have any conflicts of interest and have strictly adhered to the Ethical Guidelines of authorship of scientific papers.

Please find enclosed this Original paper entitled "Prevalence of Celiac Disease in Multiple Sclerosis", in which we present a prospective study on the frequent association of both diseases.

We have examined a series of 72 consecutive patients diagnosed with RRMS in order to study this demyelinating disease and its treatment, following all the established and accepted criteria, including a temporal and spatial dissemination of the MRI lesions.

The same cohort of patients was studied from the gastroenterologic point of view, leading us to the discovery of a high prevalence of Celiac Disease (CD) associated markers, confirmed by a serological increase of TGt and, mainly, by reviewing duodenal biopsies.

The mean prevalence of CD was around 11.1% in this series, i.e., 6 to 10 times higher than the expected values in the general population, which are about 1-2% worldwide. In addition, we have noticed a higher prevalence of CD in first-degree relatives (32%) and an increased association with other autoimmune diseases.

We also compared our findings with a control group of 123 bone marrow donors from our area. The differences between both groups were remarkable, with a p-value less than 0.05. The OR was 5.33 (CI-95%: 1.074-26.465).

It is our opinion that these findings may be of great interest, since they clearly highlight how frequently these two diseases manifest together and the convenience of looking for the presence of celiac disease markers in RRMS patients on a routine basis in order to achieve a correct and early diagnosis, thus allowing for a better monitoring of the neurologic disease, after starting a gluten-free diet regimen.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully,

Luis Rodrigo, MD