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Gender influence in Behçet Syndrome : a Tunisian study

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INTRODUCTION

Male gender is inconsistently reported as having more severe involvement in Behçet syndrome (BS) according to the studied ethnic group. We aimed to study gender influence in BS patients in the Tunisian context

METHODS

We retrospectively reviewed the medical records of BS patients followed-up in the Internal Medicine and the Ophthalmology Departments of Fattouma Bourguiba University Hospital (Monastir, Tunisia) between January 1990 and December 2023. BS was diagnosed according to the International Study Group for Behçet Disease criteria. A comparative study of clinical characteristics between males (group 1) and females (group 2) was performed

RESULTS

A total of 449 BD patients were included: 137 females (30.5%) and 312 males (69.5%) (Sex ratio M/F was 2.27). Mean age at diagnosis was 32 ±10.5 years. Main clinical characteristics of the patients are reported in Table1.

Characteristic	Prevalence (%)
Family history of BS	12.1
Oral aphthosis	92.6
Genital ulcers	70.5
Pseudofolliculitis	70.6
Erythema nodosum	9.9
Ocular inflammation	38.5
Neurological manifestations	12.5
Vascular involvement	38.1

Table 1: Main clinical characteristics of the studied population

Comparative study between the two studied groups is reported in Table 2.

	Group 1 (males)(n=310)	Group 2(females) (n=135)	P value
Oral aphtosis	90.6	97.1	0,.018
Genital aphtosis	67	79.4	0.008
Pseudofolliculitis	74.9	60.7	0.003
Ocular involvement	43.6	27	0.01
Erythema nodosum	6.8	17	0.001

Table 2: Comparative study between male and female patients in Bhçet syndrome

CONCLUSION

In the Tunisian context, BS is characterized by a male predominance. Males are more prone to develop ocular manifestations whereas females are more likely to develop milder manifestations dominated by mucocutaneous involvement.