

THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN AUTOIMMUNE THYROIDITIS AND RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS: PATHOGENETIC MECHANISMS AND CLINICAL FEATURES

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Background: Autoimmune thyroiditis (AIT) and rheumatoid arthritis (RA) are common chronic autoimmune diseases characterized by systemic inflammation. Their coexistence is frequently observed and represents an important clinical challenge. Understanding their relationship is essential for early diagnosis and optimal management.

Objective: To investigate the association between autoimmune thyroiditis and rheumatoid arthritis and to identify factors contributing to their development and progression in the same patient.

Materials and Methods: A total of 68 patients with AIT and RA were analyzed from the Tashkent Medical Academy clinic.

Laboratory assessments included:

- anti-thyroid peroxidase (anti-TPO) antibodies
- inflammatory markers

Clinical evaluation included:

- physical examination
- medical history

All patients underwent assessment of thyroid function and joint status.

Results: Patients with rheumatoid arthritis demonstrated an increased risk of developing autoimmune thyroiditis, particularly women aged 40–60 years.

Patients with comorbid conditions showed:

- more pronounced fatigue
- increased joint pain
- thyroid dysfunction

Control of one disease (e.g., RA) did not always prevent the progression of the other, highlighting the need for integrated management.

Conclusion: The coexistence of AIT and RA requires a multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach to diagnosis and treatment. Early identification of this association improves patient prognosis and quality of life. Further studies are needed to better understand the underlying pathogenetic mechanisms and to develop more effective therapeutic strategies.

Abstract:

Autoimmune thyroiditis (AIT) and rheumatoid arthritis (RA) are chronic autoimmune diseases characterized by persistent inflammation and immune dysregulation. The coexistence of these conditions is frequently observed in clinical practice and may negatively affect disease course, patient quality of life, and treatment outcomes. This study aimed to investigate the association between AIT and RA and to identify clinical and pathogenetic factors contributing to their simultaneous development. A total of 68 patients diagnosed with both AIT and RA were evaluated at the Tashkent Medical Academy clinic. Clinical assessment included physical examination, medical history analysis, evaluation of thyroid function, and joint status. Laboratory investigations involved the measurement of anti-thyroid peroxidase (anti-TPO) antibodies and inflammatory markers. The findings demonstrated that patients with RA, particularly women aged 40–60 years, had an increased risk of developing AIT. Patients with comorbid disease exhibited more severe fatigue, joint pain, and thyroid dysfunction compared with isolated disease cases. In addition, control of one autoimmune condition did not consistently prevent the progression of the other, emphasizing the importance of an integrated multidisciplinary management approach. The study highlights the clinical significance of early recognition of autoimmune comorbidity and the need for further research into shared pathogenetic mechanisms and targeted therapeutic strategies.

Keywords:

Autoimmune thyroiditis; rheumatoid arthritis; autoimmune diseases; anti-thyroid peroxidase antibodies; inflammation; thyroid dysfunction; comorbidity; pathogenesis; autoimmune comorbidity; multidisciplinary management.