



# **Monocyte chemotactic protein-1 in urine as a marker for disease activity in pediatric lupus nephritis**

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## **Table of contents**

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>List of tables.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of figures.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>List of abbreviations.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Aim of the work.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Review of literature</b>	
<b>Chapter one: Pathogenesis of SLE.....</b>	<b>2</b>
Pathogenic autoantibodies.....	3
Genetics of systemic lupus erythematosus.....	4
Histocompatibility (HLA) genes.....	5
Mannose-binding protein.....	9
Programmed cell death gene-1.....	9
Protein tyrosine phosphatase.....	10
Poly (ADP-ribose) polymerase (PARP).....	11
Monocyte Chemoattractant Protein 1 (MCP1).....	12
Interleukin-10.....	13
Interleukin-6.....	13
<b>Chapter Two: Clinical features of Systemic Lupus Erythematosus</b>	
Classification criteria.....	16
Lupus disease activity indices.....	20
Clinical symptoms of lupus nephritis.....	23
Histological classification.....	25

International society of nephrology/renal pathology society classification of lupus nephritis.....	26
Monitoring of lupus nephritis.....	31
Assessment of prognosis of lupus nephritis and risk stratification.....	33
Laboratory investigations.....	34
<b>Chapter Three: Biomarkers in Lupus Nephritis.....</b>	<b>37</b>
Introduction.....	37
Serum and urinary biomarkers.....	
Chemokines.....	42
Monocyte chemoattractant protein-1 (MCP-1).....	42
Neutrophil gelatinase-associated lipocalin (NGAL).....	44
Tumor Necrosis Factor-Like Inducer of Apoptosis (TWEAK).....	45
Transferrin, $\alpha_1$ -Acid-Glycoprotein, Ceruloplasmin, and Lipocalin-Type Prostaglandin d-Synthetase.....	46
Hepcidin.....	47
Autoantibodies.....	47
Biomarkers that Anticipate Development of CKD and prognosis .....	48
Biomarkers that Predict Renal Pathology.....	50
<b>Patients and methods.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Results.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Discussion.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Conclusions and Recommendations .....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Summary.....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>90</b>

## **Abstract:**

Systemic lupus erythematosus is a multi-systemic, autoimmune disorder which is episodic in nature with a broad spectrum of clinical and immunological manifestations. As the course of lupus nephritis is often unpredictable, it is important to identify reliable, noninvasive methods to repeatedly assess the condition of the kidneys in these patients during follow up.

To assess the potential use of MCP1 as a marker for disease activity in lupus nephritis 56 SLE patients were recruited. They were divided into three groups one with active lupus nephritis (n=19), another with inactive lupus nephritis (n=25) and a third formed of SLE patients who had no renal affection. Two other groups were added for comparison one formed of 12 cases who had non-lupus nephritis and another of age and sex matched healthy controls (n=19).

Urinary MCP1/creatinine ratio was found to be significantly higher in the two groups of active nephritis –both lupus and non-lupus- ( $p < 0.0001$ ). Among the lupus groups, it correlated positively with rSLEDAI ( $r = 0.486214$ ,  $p = 0.0001$ ) as well as with other known markers of lupus activity including the ESR ( $r = 0.58189$ ,  $p = 0.0001$ ), leucopenia and hypertension. Also, across all the study groups, the MCP1/creatinine ratio correlated positively with the protein/creatinine ratio ( $r = 0.551$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ).

Urinary MCP1/creatinine ratio increases in active nephritis regardless of its cause and thus it can be used as a non-invasive indicator of active renal affection in known cases of systemic lupus.

**Keywords:** MCP-1, urinary biomarkers, lupus nephritis.

## **List of Tables**

Table (1) Non-histocompatibility genes involved in SLE

Table (2) Autoimmunity genes and interferon (IFN) pathway genes

Table (3) Revised Criteria for the Diagnosis of Systemic Lupus Erythematosus

Table (4) SLEDAI score

Table (5) Serum biomarkers that correlate with lupus nephritis activity

Table (6) Urinary biomarkers for SLE nephritis

Table (7) Other urinary biomarkers that correlate with disease activity in lupus nephritis

Table (8) Biomarkers that can detect prognosis in lupus nephritis

Table (9) Other biomarkers that correlate with histological activity in lupus nephritis

Table (10) Renal biopsy findings among the two groups of lupus nephritis.

Table (11) Distribution of immunosuppressive treatment among the SLE groups

Table (12) The frequency of haematuria among the study groups.

Table (13) The percentage of patients among each group achieving different rSLEDAI

Table (14) Laboratory data from all studied groups

Table (15) the ANOVA test results between the different groups

Table (16) Post Hoc analysis (LSD) comparing the mean values of MCP1/creatinine ratios in a group-to-group basis.

Table (17) A comparison between the mean results of Protein/creatinine ratios in a group-to-group basis.

Table (18) LSD test for pair-comparisons regarding ESR

Table (19) Fisher's test of LSD comparing serum creatinine results in a group-to-group basis

Table (20) Correlations between some of the parameters in the lupus groups

Table (21) Correlations between the different parameters assessed in all studied groups.



## **List of Figures**

Figure (1) Light microscopy and immunofluorescence in lupus nephritis

Figure (2) Sex distribution among the study groups

Figure (3) Oedema among the different lupus groups

Figure (4) Hypertension in the lupus nephritis groups

Figure (5) A graph showing the frequency of the different anti-hypertensive treatments among the systemic lupus groups

Figure (6) Percentage of patients with albuminuria in the different groups as determined by dipstick

Figure (7) The distribution of MCP1/creatinine ratios among the five study groups.

Figure (8) A scatter plot diagram showing the correlation between MCP1/creatinine ratios and protein/creatinine ratios in groups I, II and III.

Figure (9) A scatter plot diagram showing the correlation between MCP1/creatinine ratios and the ESR in groups I, II and III

Figure (10) A scatter plot diagram showing the correlation between MCP1/creatinine ratios and rSLEDAI in groups I, II and III.

Figure (11) A scatter plot diagram showing the correlation between MCP1/creatinine ratios and the total leucocytic count in groups I, II and III

Figure (12) A scatter plot diagram showing the correlation between MCP1/creatinine ratios and the protein/creatinine ratios in all study groups.

Figure (13) A scatter plot diagram showing the correlation between MCP1/creatinine ratios and the age of the patients in all study groups

## **Abbreviations**

ACR: American College of Rheumatology  
AGP:  $\alpha$ -1-acid-glycoprotein (AGP)  
AKI: acute kidney injury  
ANA: anti-nuclear antibodies  
Anti-DNA: anti-double-stranded DNA  
Anti-Sm: anti-Smith  
APCs: antigen-presenting cells  
APL: anti-phospholipid antibodies  
BILAG: British Isles Lupus Assessment Group index  
C1q: complement component 1q  
CCL2: chemokine ligand 2  
CKD: chronic kidney disease  
CNS: Central nervous system  
CP: ceruloplasmin  
CPK: creatinine phosphokinase  
Creat.: creatinine  
CRP: C-reactive protein  
CsK: c-src tyrosine kinase.  
CTLA4: cytotoxic T-lymphocyte antigen 1  
CVA: cerebro-vascular accident  
CXCL10: CXC motif chemokine 10

dsDNA : double stranded deoxy-ribonucleic acid

ECLAM: European Consensus Lupus Activity Measurement

EM: electron microscopy

EMG: electromyogram

Fc: fragment crystallizable

FOXP3: The forkhead transcription factor

GFR: glomerular filtration rate

GN: glomerulonephritis

HLA: human leukocyte antigen

I/F: immunofluorescence

ICAM: intercellular cell adhesion receptor

IFN- $\alpha$  inducible protein MxA: Myxovirus (influenza virus) resistance 1, interferon-inducible protein

IFN- $\alpha$ : interferon-alpha

IFN- $\gamma$ : interferon-gamma

IgG: immunoglobulin G

IL-10: interleukin 10

IL-6 : interleukin 6

IRF: interferon regulatory factor

IV: intra-venous

L/M: light microscopy

LAI: Lupus Activity Index

LE cells: lupus erythematosus cells

LFABP: fatty acid binding protein in liver

L-FABP: Liver-type fatty acid binding protein

LN: lupus nephritis

L-PGDS: lipocalin-type prostaglandin d-synthetase (L-PGDS)

LSD: least significant difference.

LYP: lymphoid-specific protein tyrosine phosphatase.

MBL : mannose-binding lectin.

MBP: Mannose-binding protein.

MCP-1: monocyte chemo-attractant protein-1

MCTD: mixed connective tissue disease

mERCP: Membrane endothelial protein C receptor

MHC: major histocompatibility complex

MIF: macrophage inhibitory factor

MMF: mycophenolate mofetil

NGAL: neutrophil gelatinase associate lipocalin

NK cells: natural killer cells

NOD2/CARD15: caspase recruitment domain-containing protein

PARP: Poly (ADP-ribose) polymerase

PDCD1: programme cell death domain 1

Plt: platelet

Ptn: protein

PTPN22 :protein tyrosine phosphatase 22

RANTES: Regulated upon Activation, Normal T-cell Expressed, and Secreted.

SLAM: Systemic Lupus Activity Measure

SLE: Systemic lupus erythematosus

SLEDAI: Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Disease Activity Index

SNPs : single nucleotide polymorphisms

ssRNA: single stranded ribo-nucleic acid

STAT-1: signal transducer and activator of transcription

TLC: total leucocytic count

TLR : Toll-like receptor

TNF- $\alpha$  : tumour necrosis factor-alpha

TWEAK: Tumor necrosis factor-like inducer of apoptosis

TYK2: tyrosine kinase 2

VCAM: vascular cell adhesion receptor

VEGF: vascular endothelial growth factor

WHO: world health organization

## **Introduction and aim of the work:**

Systemic lupus erythematosus is an unpredictable, multi-systemic, autoimmune disorder which is episodic in nature with a broad spectrum of clinical and immunological manifestations. It is characterized by wide-spread inflammation of blood vessels and connective tissues. Diagnosis is classically made by grouping 4 out of eleven criteria established by the American College of Rheumatology in 1997. (Marks et al., 2008). Biopsy-proven lupus nephritis occurs in around 80% of all cases of childhood-onset SLE. (Marks et al., 2008).

As the course of LN is often unpredictable, it is important to identify reliable, noninvasive methods to repeatedly assess the condition of the kidneys in these patients.

Among the blood investigations marking disease activity are anemia, leucopenia, thrombocytopenia, elevated ESR as well as reduced C3 and C4. (Marks et al., 2008).

Urinary biomarkers are easily obtained and probably are best at reflecting the current renal status, as they specifically represent local inflammatory activity. Among the potential urinary biomarkers are TWEAK, Lipocalin-2, MCP-1, IL-10, IL-6, and IL-8. (Schwartz et al., 2007). MCP-1 is a key chemokine involved in monocyte chemotaxis and it is consistently found at high levels in the urine of patients with active LN. ( Li et al., 2006).

## **Aim of the work:**

This study aims to assess the use of MCP-1 in urine as an early marker for disease activity in cases of lupus nephritis.

# **Chapter One**

## **Pathogenesis of SLE**

The pathogenesis of Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) is complex. Target tissue damage is caused by pathogenic autoantibodies and immune complexes. The abnormal immune response that permits persistence of pathogenic B and T cells has multiple components, including activation of the innate immune system by DNA and RNA-containing antigens, processing of increased quantities of self –antigens by APCs (antigen-presenting cells), hyperactivation of B and T cells, and failure of multiple regulatory networks to interrupt this process. The immunological abnormalities occur in a framework of interactions among multiple susceptibility genes (and insufficient protective genes), gender influences, and environmental stimuli (Hahn &Tsao,2010).

Genome scan studies have identified eight chromosomal regions with significant linkage to SLE that are confirmed by individual cohorts, suggesting that susceptibility genes may be identified within each of these loci. Linkage studies and single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) have led to the identification of positional candidate genes, and their functional allelic variants have demonstrated molecular pathogenesis of the disease. The discovery of positional candidate genes that are associated with various autoimmune diseases signifies a common pathway in the mechanism of these diseases. Copy polymorphisms in susceptibility genes provide evidence in how genetic plasticity affects complex phenotypes as seen in SLE (Wong&Tsao,2006).