

Presentation Abstract Submission

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Research Title	The Prevalence of Celiac Disease in the United Arab Emirates children, a single centre study

Abstract:

Background Celiac disease (CD) is an autoimmune disease triggered by the intake of gluten in genetically susceptible individuals. The gluten is found in wheat, rye and barley. The disease has a worldwide prevalence of 1% and is characterized by small intestine enteropathy along with nutrients and vitamins malabsorption and maldigestion. CD can occur at any age with variable symptoms upon presentation, symptoms in children usually include diarrhoea, abdominal pain and constipation. In addition to wide range of extraintestinal symptoms like growth retardation and anaemia. Aim To measure the prevalence of CD in children presenting with symptoms or associated conditions with CD in UAE children Methods All children (aged <18) who did celiac disease serology at Jallia Children's Speciality Hospital Dubai in the period of Jan 2018 to July 2021 were studied retrospectively by conducting a chart-based review study. Information collected include demographics, laboratory findings, clinical presentation and associated comorbidities. Results A total of 851 celiac disease blood tests were performed during the study period, out of which 22 children was found to have confirmed celiac disease according to the European Society of Paediatric Gastroenterology , Hepatology and Nutrition (ESPGHAN) criteria that yields a prevalence of 2.6%. The majority of children with CD were females (60%) and of Emirati nationality (70%). Median age for children with CD was 7 years old and 23% of them lie in the underweight category. 12 of CD patients did the serology testing following gastrointestinal symptoms while others were ordered the test for being in at-risk group. Diabetes type 1, iron deficiency anaemia and Hashimoto thyroiditis were the most common associated comorbidities with values of 32%, 27% and 10% respectively. Conclusion In our population, CD was more common than previously reported. Almost half of our patients were diagnosed without having gastrointestinal symptoms, that suggests a high index of suspicion of CD even when asymptomatic with other associated comorbidities.