Abstract

OBJECTIVE:

There are different imaging techniques to assess the parotid glands (i.e., sialography, salivary gland scintigraphy) in patients with Sjögren syndrome (SS). However, their use is limited by the invasive character or high cost. Ultrasound (US) is gaining interest by rheumatologists as a complementary diagnostic tool for SS. To date, there is an increasing body of evidence supporting its sensitivity in the assessment of salivary glands in SS. The aim of our study was to analyze the potential role of US as a diagnostic and prognostic tool in SS and to discuss existing evidence to support its application use.

METHODS:

A systematic search was performed in the electronic database PubMed, using the following search terms: (salivary glands OR parotid glands OR submandibular glands) AND Sjögren's syndrome AND (ultrasonography OR ultrasound OR sonography). Titles, abstracts, and full reports were systematically screened.

RESULTS:

The results of the studies analyzed in this review show encouraging results in terms of accuracy, validity, and diagnostic value, which leads us to believe that in the future US could become the reference imaging tool to assess SS. The studies include a small cohort of patients, and there is no standardized approach in terms of US techniques for the assessment of salivary glands.

CONCLUSIONS:

Ultrasound of major salivary glands is a useful tool for diagnosis, prognostic evaluation, and response to treatment in SS. The use of this imaging technology is still under development, and more multicentric studies are needed to validate this tool.

PMID: 29239938