Inflammatory Markers and Incidence of other Autoimmune Diseases in Patients with Oral Lichen Planus

Upalni markeri i učestalost drugih autoimunih bolesti u oboljelih od oralnoga lihena planusa

Introduction

Oral lichen planus (OLP) is chronic immune, inflammatory disease of the oral cavity of a still unknown etiology. Cell-mediated immunity triggered by endogenous and exogenous factors holds a special place in the pathogenesis of OLP, especially in individuals with a genetic predisposition to disease. The disease may occur along with skin changes, in case of which it is referred to as skin lichen planus (LP). Oral changes can occur at the same time as skin lesions, but in 30 to 70% of cases they occur separately (1). LP has been associated with a number of autoimmune disorders, but it remains unclear whether patients with LP are more likely to develop other autoimmune diseases or the diseases are related etiologically (2). Cutaneous LP may also occur in some autoimmune diseases, such as Sjögren’s syndrome (SS), rheumatoid arthritis (RA), sarcoidosis, autoimmune hepatitis and vitiligo.
Pathogenetic mechanisms of OLP formation imply an autoimmune reaction in which T lymphocytes invade genetically altered basal keratinocytes. The target antigen that triggers the reaction has not yet been detected. In susceptible patients, basal keratinocytes present antigen permanently, leading to chronicity and their direct cell-mediated damage (5). The inflammatory infiltrate in OLP is composed of lymphocytes and a small number of macrophages. T lymphocytes dominate over B lymphocytes, and CD4+ T (helper) cells are more common than CD8+ T cells (cytotoxic/ suppressor) (6). Autoimmune disease (AID) is a pathological condition triggered by an autoimmune process (7). The etiology of AID is multifaceted. It is caused by impaired neuroendocrine-humoral regulation of immunity in genetically predisposed individuals exposed to the provocative action of external factors. Epidemiological studies have shown that genetic factors determine the preference for AID, as indicated by family relatedness and more frequent diseases of identical and fraternal twins. According to Roitt, organ specific diseases are distinguished from a wide range of AIDs versus organ nonspecific or multisystemic diseases (8).

The importance of the autoimmune reaction in the etiopathogenesis of OLP is based on studies that have observed some changes in the population of T lymphocytes in the peripheral blood of patients, including decreased CD4+ and CD45RA+ lymphocytes. The finding of suppressed spontaneous lymphocyte proliferation in peripheral blood mediated by CD4+ and CD45RA+ cells indicates their importance in the onset of this disease (3). Oral lichen planus can be associated with AIDs and disorders with CD4+ and CD45RA+ cell reduction (3). The association of chronic liver disease with the onset of OLP has also been noted, especially autoimmune liver diseases such as primary biliary cirrhosis (PBC) and chronic active hepatitis (9, 10). Diabetes mellitus (DM) is often described as an important etiologic factor in OLP formation (11). A possible etiological background of ulcerative colitis in the onset of OLP has also been described (12, 13). Among other intestinal diseases, celiac disease (14) and Chron's disease (15) are associated with OLP. A more common occurrence of OLP has also been reported in patients with some skin diseases such as psoriasis or lichen sclerosus (3).

Previous studies have shown significant increase in inflammatory markers levels in OLP patients (16). Moreover, it is concluded that plasma CRP level could be a potential marker of increased risk of cancer (17).

The main objectives of this study were: 1) to investigate differences in the values of the inflammatory markers (sedimentation (SE), C-reactive protein (CRP), leukocytes (L)) between subjects with OLP and subjects without pathologic changes in the oral mucosa; 2) examine differences in the incidence of the disease from other autoimmune diseases between subjects with OLP and healthy subjects of the control group. (3). The occurrence of OLP can also be enhanced by psychological distress, stress and anxiety (4).

Patogenetski mehanizmi nastanka OLP-a podrazumijevaju autoimunu reakciju u kojoj T-limfociti napadaju antigeni promijenjene bazalne keratinocite. Ciljni antigen koji pokreće reakciju još nije otkriven. Kod podložnih bolesnika bazalni keratinociti trajno prezentiraju antigen, što dovodi do kroniciteta i njihova izravneg stanično posredovanog oštećenja (5). Upalni infiltrat u OLP-u sastavljen je od limfocita i manjeg broja makrofaga. T-limfociti dominantiraju u odnosu prema B-limfocitima, a CD4+-T-stanice (pomoćnike) češće su negoli CD8+-T-stanice (citotoksično/supresorske) (6).

Autoimuna bolest (AIB) patološko je stanje potaknuće autoimunim procesom (7). Etiologiju AIB-u uvjetuje više čimbenika. Nastaje zbog poremećene neuroendokrinohumoralne regulacije imunosti kod genetski predisponiranih osoba izloženih provokacijskom djelovanju vanjskih čimbenika. U epidemiološkim studijama ističe se da genetski čimbenici determiniraju sklonost prema AIB-u, na što upućuje obiteljska povezanost i češće obolijevanje jednojajčanih i dvojajčanih blizanaca. Prema Roittu, iz širokoga spektra AIB-a izdvajaju se organspecifične bolesti nasuprot organonesspecifičnim, odnosno multisustavnim bolestima (8).

Važnost autoimune reakcije u etiopatogenezi OLP-a temelji se na istraživanjima u kojima su se opazile promjene u populaciji T-limfocita u perifernoj krvi oboljelih, uključujući smanjeni broj limfocita CD4+ i CD45RA+. Nalaz suprimirane spontane proliferacije limfocita u perifernoj krvi po-sredovan stanicama CD4+i CD45RA+ upućuje na njihovu važnost u nastanku te bolesti (3). Oralni lichen planus može se povezati s mnogim AIB-ima i poremećajima kod kojih je uočena redukcija stanica CD4+ i CD45RA+ (3). Uočena je i povezanost kroničnih bolesti jetre s pojavom OLP-a, posebno autoimunih jetrenih bolesti poput primarne bilijarne ciroze (PBC-a) i kroničnog aktivnog hepatitis (9, 10). Diabetes mellitus (DM) često se opisuje kao važan etiološki čimbenik u nastanku OLP-a (11). Također je opisana moguća etiološka pozadina ulceroznog kolitisa. (12, 13). Od ostalih crvenih bolesti, u vezu s OLP-om dovode se celijakija (14) i Chronova bolest (15). Češća pojava OLP-a opisana je i kod oboljelih od nekih kožnih bolesti kao što su psorijaza ili lichen skleros (3).

U dosadašnjim studijama istaknuto je značajno povećanje upalnih markera kod pacijenata s oralnim lichenom (16). Stojišće, zaključeno je da razina CRP-a u plazmi može biti pokazatelj povećanog rizika od razvoja karcinoma (17).

Glavni ciljevi ovog istraživanja bili su:
1) ispitati postoji li razlika u vrijednostima ispitivanih upalnih markera (sedimentacije – SE, reaktivnog C-proteina – CRP-a i leukocita – L) između ispitanika s OLP-om i onih bez patoloških promjena na sluznici usne šupljine
2) ispitati postoji li razlika u učestalosti i drugih autoimunih bolesti između ispitanika s OLP-om i zdravih ispitanika iz kontrolne skupine.
Materials and methods

Respondents and Procedures

The study was initiated with the approval of the Ethics Committee of the University of Split, School of Medicine. It was implemented according to the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki in the period from September 2011 to July 2017. Respondents were included in the survey after signing informed consent. A total of 126 subjects participated in the study. The study group consisted of 63 subjects who were diagnosed with OLP by clinical oral examination and histopathological findings. The control group consisted of 63 randomly selected subjects with no pathological changes in the oral mucosa.

From all subjects a detailed medical history was taken during the first examination at the Department of the Oral Medicine of the Dental Polyclinic Split - Teaching Database Study of Dental Medicine, School of Medicine, University of Split. Based on the medical history, data were obtained on age, sex, cigarette smoking habits (yes / no) and daily consumption of alcoholic beverages (yes / no), and the presence of other autoimmune diseases. The medical history of the presence of another autoimmune disease is supported by detailed medical records. Pathohistological diagnosis (PHD) confirmed the clinically diagnosed OLP. A biopsy specimen for PHD was taken from the edge of a pathologically altered oral mucosa after application of a local anesthetic (0.7 ml). The histopathological criteria of OLP included the following: hyperkeratosis and various stages of orthokeratosis or parakeratosis, vacuolation of the basal layer with apoptotic keratinocytes, dense lymphocytic inflammatory cell infiltrate at the epithelial-connective border, presence of eosinophilic colloidal body bodies in the area of basal lamina (Civatte bodies) and epithelial lengthening (appearance of saw teeth). The erosive forms of OLP histopathologically have included the presence of erosion, neutrophils and fibrin deposits in the epithelium. All subjects in the test group were in the acute phase of the disease at the time of taking part in the study and their blood was taken for analysis before treatment was initiated.

The exclusion criterion for the test group was an acute febrile condition, and the subjects were asked about it before engaging in blood research and sampling.

Laboratory analysis

All serological examinations were performed in the same laboratory of the Institute for Medical-Biochemical Diagnostics of the Clinical Hospital Center Split. A sample of venous blood was taken from each patient to determine SE rate and L number using standard laboratory procedures. CRP concentration was determined after blood sampling in a Vacutainer tube without anticoagulants (Becton Dickinson, Plymouth, UK). Multigent CRP Vario reagent was used for the determination of CRP on an ARCHITECT ci8200 (Abbott, Wiesbaden, Germany) following the manufacturer’s instructions. The serological findings of SE, CRP and L are expressed metrically, in defined units and with defined reference values: SE (5-28 mm / h), CRP (<5.0 mg / L) and L.

Materijali i metodologija

Ispitanici i postupci

Istraživanje je počelo nakon odobrenja Etičkog povjerenstva Medicinskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Splitu. Provedeno je prema načelima Helsinške deklaracije od rujna 2011. do srpnja 2017. godine. Ispitanici su uključeni u istraživanje nakon što su potpisali informirani pristanak. Sudjelovalo ih je ukupno 126. Ispitnu skupinu činila su 63 ispitanika kojima je kliničkim oralnim pregledom i patohistološkim nalazom potvrđena dijagnoza OLP-a, a u kontrolnoj su bila 63 nasumično odabrana ispitanika bez patoloških promjena na oralnoj sluznici.

Svim ispitnicima uzeta je detaljna anamneza tijekom prvog pregleda u ambulantu Odjela za oralnu medicinu Stomatološke poliklinike Split – nastavne baze Studija dentalne medicine Medicinskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Splitu. Na temelju anamneze dobiveni su podaci o dobi, spolu, navikama svakodnevnog pušenja cigareta (da/ne) i svakodnevnog konzumiranja alkoholnih pića (da/ne) te o drugim autoimunim bolestima. Anamnestički podatci o prisutnosti druge autoimune bolesti potkrijepljeni su detaljnom medicinskog dokumentacijom. Patohistološkom dijagnostikom (PHD-on) potvrđena je klinički postavljena dijagnoza OLP-a. Biopsijski uzorak za PHD uzet je s ruba patološki promijenjene oralne sluznice nakon aplikiranja lokalnog anestetika (0,7 ml). Histo patološki kriteriji OLP-a uključivali su sljedeće: hiperkeratozu i različite stupnjeve ortokeratoze ili parakeratoze, vakuolizaciju bazalnog sloja s apoptotičnim keratinocitima, gusti limfocitni oralni stanični infiltrat na epitelno-vezivnoj granici, eozinofilna kolioidna tjelesa u području bazalne membrane (Civatte bodies) i nazupčani izgled epitelnih proljeća (izgled poput zubaca pile). Erozivni oblici OLP-a uključivali su patohistološki i erozivne, neutrofilne i fibrinske depozite u epitelu. Isključni kriteriji bile su displazije u lezijama OLP-a.

Svi iz ispitne skupine bili su u akutnoj fazi bolesti kada su uključeni u istraživanje te im je izvedena venska krv za analizu prije nego što su počeli s lijekovanjem.

Kriteriji za isključenje za ispitnu skupinu bilo je akutno febrilno stanje, o čemu su ispitanici odgovorili prije uključivanja u istraživanje i uzorkovanja krvi.

Laboratorijske analize

Sve serološke pretrage provedene su u istom laboratoriju Zavoda za medicinsko-biokemijsku dijagnostiku Kliničkog bolničkog centra Split. Svakom bolesniku izvađen je uzorak venske krvi za određivanje brzine sedimentacije i broja leukocita standardnim laboratorijskim postupcima. Određivanje vrijednosti koncentracije CRP-a obavljalo se nakon uzimanja uzorka krvi u Vacutainer tubu bez antikoagulansa (Becton Dickinson, Plymouth, Velika Britanija). Za određivanje CRP-a upotrijebljen je reagens Multigent CRP Vario na uređaju ARCHITECT ci8200 (Abbott, Wiesbaden, Njemačka), a pri priloženim uputama proizvođača. Serološki nalazi sedimentacije, C-reaktivnog proteina i leukocita izraženi su metrički, u definiranim jedinicama i s definiranim referen-
(3.4-9, 7 x 109 / L). The values of SE, CRP, and L are also presented qualitatively; as values within the reference interval (negative) or values greater than the upper limit of the reference interval (elevated).

Statistical analysis

The collected data were entered into spreadsheets and an analysis was performed using the statistical package Statistica 12. In the statistical processing of the results, the methods of descriptive statistics, $\chi^2$-test, Fisher's exact test, and the Student's t-test were used. The values of the continuous variables are presented by the mean and the median, and the categorical variables are presented as an integer and a percentage. A $\chi^2$ test was used to compare the categorical variables between the test and control groups. Due to the limitations of the $\chi^2$ test when applied in situations where the presence of the feature modality is low, Fisher's exact test was used. T-test tested the difference in numerical values among the observed groups. The results were interpreted at a significance level of P <0.05.

Results

A total of 126 subjects participated in the study, 23 men and 103 women. The test group consisted of 54 women (85.71%) and 9 men (14.29%), while in the control group there were 49 women (77.78%) and 14 men (22.22%). There was no statistically significant difference among the study groups with respect to the gender of the subjects (P = 0.248).

There were 49 women (77.78%) and 14 men (22.22%) in the test group, and 9 men (14.29%), while in the control group there were 23 men and 103 women. The test group consisted of 54 women (85.71%) and 9 men (14.29%), while in the control group it was 49 women (77.78%) and 14 men (22.22%).

Table 1 shows the mean, median and minimum and maximum age of the test and control subjects.

| Variable • Varijabla | Group • Skupina | Statistical Parameters • Statistički parametri |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| AGE • DOB             | OLP             | N     | X      | M     | Minimum | Maximum |
|                       | Control group   | 63    | 62.62  | 62    | 40      | 80      |
|                       | Kontrolna skupina | 63    | 62.21  | 64    | 40      | 81      |

Table 2 shows the proportion of subjects whose values of test inflammatory markers (SE, CRP, L) were elevated (above the upper limit of the reference interval).

There was no statistically significant difference between the study groups with respect to the age of the subjects (P = 0.819).

The average value of SE in subjects with OLP was 12.17 mm/h, whereas in the control group it was 12.36 mm/h. No statistically significant difference in mean SE was found between the study groups (P = 0.902). The average CRP value in subjects with OLP was 3.56 mg/L and in the control group was 2.45 mg/L (P = 0.270). The average value of L was 5.84 x 109 / L in the test group and 6.01 x 109 / L in the control group (P = 0.575).

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Između ispitivanih skupina nije bilo statistički značajne razlike s obzirom na dob ispitanika (P = 0.819).

Probosć je vrijednost SE-a kod ispitanika s OLP-om bila je 12.17 mm/h, a u kontrolnoj skupini iznosila je 12.36 mm/h. Nije utvrđena statistički značajna razlika u srednjoj vrijednosti sedimentacije između ispitivanih skupina (P = 0.902). Prosječna vrijednost CRP-a kod ispitanika s OLP-om bila je 3.56 mg/L, a u kontrolnoj skupini 2.45 mg/L (P = 0.270). Prosječna vrijednost L-a iznosila je 5.84 x 109 / L u ispitnoj skupini, te 6.01 x 109 / L u kontrolnoj (P = 0.575).

U tablici 2. prikazan je udio ispitanika čije su vrijednosti ispitivanih upalnih markera (SE-a, CRP-a, L-a) bile povišene (iznad gornje granice referentnog intervala).
For all three measured inflammatory markers, there was no statistically significant difference in the number of subjects with elevated values between the test and control groups ($P = 0.364$ for SE; $P = 1.000$ for CRP and $P = 0.219$ for L).

Table 3 shows the proportion of subjects diagnosed with another autoimmune disease in both study groups.

### Table 3. Proportion of subjects with other autoimmune disease

| OTHER AUTOIMUNE DISEASE • DRUGA AUTOIMUNA BOLEST | \(\text{YES • DA} N \%\) | \(\text{NO • NE} N \%\) | \(P\) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---|
| OLP             | 25 (39.68 %)    | 38 (60.32 %)    | <0.001 |
| Control group • Kontrolna skupina | 4 (6.35 %) | 59 (93.65 %) | |

Devet ispitanika (14,29 %) s OLP-om navelo je kožni LP, sedam (11,11 %) celijakiju, pet (7,94 %) DM, tri (4,76 %) SS, a jedan je ispitanik (1,59 %) naveo Hashimotov tireoiditis, RA i vitiligo. U kontrolnoj skupini od autoimunih bolesti navode se SS kod dva ispitanika (3,17 %) te DM i Raynau dov sindrom kod jednoga (1,59 %).

Anamnestički su uzeti podatci o navikama svakodnevnog konzumiranja cigareta i alkohola. U ispitnoj skupini sedam (11,11 %) puši svaki dan, a 11 (17,46 %) pije alkohol. U kontrolnoj skupini 11 ispitanika (17,46 %) naveo je da svaki dan puši cigarete, a sedam (11,11 %) pije alkohol. Između ispitivanih skupina nije bilo statistički značajne razlike u navikama pušenja (\(P = 0.308\)) i konzumiranja alkoholnih pića (\(P = 0.308\)).

### Discussion

Oral lichen planus is an inflammatory disease of the oral cavity mucosa (18), hence the aim of this study was to investigate whether there was a difference in the values of inflammatory markers (SE, CRP, and L) between the patients with OLP and subjects without pathological changes in the oral mucosa.

Determination of the rate of SE is a laboratory test which determines the presence of an inflammatory reaction in the body. Measurement demonstrates a change in plasma protein concentration, and changes in plasma composition will cause accelerated SE (30). The average value of SE in subjects with OLP was 12.17 mm / h and in the control group was 12.36 mm / h.

Devet ispitanika (14,29 %) s OLP-om navelo je kožni LP, sedam (11,11 %) celijakiju, pet (7,94 %) DM, tri (4,76 %) SS, a jedan je ispitanik (1,59 %) naveo Hashimotov tireoiditis, RA i vitiligo. U kontrolnoj skupini od autoimunih bolesti navode se SS kod dva ispitanika (3,17 %) te DM i Raynau dov sindrom kod jednoga (1,59 %).

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### Rasprava

Oralni lihen planus upalna je bolest sluznice usne šupljine (18) i zato je cilj ovog istraživanja bio ispitati postoji li razlika u vrijednostima upalnih markera (SE-a, CRP-a i L-a) između oboljelih od OLP-a i ispitanika bez patoloških promjena na oralnoj sluznici.

Određivanje brzine SE-a laboratorijski je test kojim se utvrđuje upalna reakcija u organizmu. Mjerenjem se dokazuje koncentracija plazmatičkih bjelančevina, a promjene u sastavu plazme uzrokovat će ubrzanje sedimentaciju (30). Prosjeca vrijednost SE-a kod ispitanika s OLP-om iznosila je 12,17 mm/h, a u kontrolnoj skupini 12,36 mm/h, što nije bilo statistički značajno različito (\(P = 0.902\)). Ipak,
mm/h, which was not significantly different (P = 0.902). Nevertheless, a slightly larger number of OLP subjects than those in the control group (14 vs. 10) had increased sedimentation (> 28 mm/h).

Protein synthesis is accelerated in response to inflammation in liver cells the most important of which is CRP. Plasma CRP concentration correlates best with SE value (19). In their study, Shahidi et al. demonstrated a significant increase in CRP levels in subjects with dysplastic OLP lesions and oral squamous cell carcinoma (16). In this study, we did not include subjects with dysplastic OLP lesions as this was the exclusive criterion. In both study groups, 56 subjects (88.89%) had CRP values lower than 5 mg/L, respectively, i.e. within the reference interval. The average CRP value in subjects with OLP was 3.56 mg/L, while in the control group it was 2.45 mg/L which, although lower, was not statistically significant (P = 0.270).

Leukocytosis is a common reaction of the body to bacterial inflammation (17). The average L value was 5.84 x 10^9/L in the test group and 6.01 x 10^9/L in the control group, which also showed no statistically significant difference (P = 0.575). Five subjects (3.94%) with OLP and two subjects (3.17%) in the control group had the increased value L (> 9.7 x 10^9/L). In our study, we did not prove a statistically significant difference in the values of inflammatory markers (SE, CRP, and L) in the blood between subjects with OLP and the subjects without pathological changes in the oral cavity mucosa.

The importance of the autoimmune reaction in the etiopathogenesis of OLP is based on studies in which changes in T lymphocyte populations in peripheral blood of patients have been noted (20). In this study, 25 subjects (39.68%) with OLP reported a history of another autoimmune disease, whereas in the control group, only four (6.35%) reported a history of another autoimmune disease, which is a statistically significant difference (P <0.001). A study by Cigić et al. showed a higher incidence of celiac disease in patients with OLP than in people with healthy oral mucosa and among the ordinary population (21). This fact is confirmed by the results of our study because celiac disease was the second most common autoimmune disease in subjects with OLP.

Every day cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption did not show statistically significant differences between the study groups. Although these habits are not directly related to the development of OLP, changes in similar clinical and histopathological appearance can sometimes be caused by the toxic effect of alcohol and cigarettes on oral mucosa. Barbosa et al. do not link OLP with these habits in their research (20). Most OLP patients were non-smokers (97.3%) and they did not consume alcohol (20), as shown by our study.

**Conclusion**

Although no statistically significant difference in the mean values of the examined inflammatory markers in blood (SE, CRP, L) between OLP patients and control subjects was found in this study, there was a statistically significantly higher incidence of other autoimmune diseases in patients with povišenu sedimentaciju (> 28 mm/h) imalo je nešto više ispitanika s OLP-om, negoli onih iz kontrolne skupine (14 vs 10).

Kao odgovor na upalu u jetrenim se stanicama ubrzava sinteza bjelančevina, a najvažniji od njih jest CRP. Koncentracija CRP-a u plazmi najbolje korelira s vrijednošću SE-a (19). Shahidi i suradnici u svoju istraživanje dokazali su značajnim porast razine CRP-a kod ispitanika s displastičnim lezijama OLP-a i oralnim karcinomom pločastih stanica (16). U ovom istraživanju nismo uključili ispitanike s displastičnim lezijama OLP-a jer je to bio isključivi kriterij. U obje ispitivane skupine po 56 ispitanika (88,89%) imalo je vrijednost CRP-a manja od 5 mg/L, odnosno unutar referentnog intervala. Prosječna vrijednost CRP-a kod ispitanika s OLP-om iznosila je 3,56 mg/L, a u kontrolnoj skupini bila je 2,45 mg/L što, iako niže, nije bilo statistički značajno (P = 0,270).

Leukocitoza je uobičajena reakcija tijela na bakterijske upale (17). Prosječna vrijednost leukocita iznosila je 5,84 x 10^9/L u ispitnoj skupini i 6,01 x 10^9/L u kontrolnoj, što također nije pokazivalo statistički značajnu razliku (P = 0,575). Povišenu vrijednost L-a (> 9,7 x 10^9/L) imalo je pet ispitanika (7,94%) s OLP-om i dva (3,17%) iz kontrolne skupine. U našem istraživanju nismo dokazali statistički značajnu razliku u vrijednostima upalnih markera (SE-a, CRP-a i L-a) u krvi između ispitanika s OLP-om i onih bez patoloških promjena na sluznici usne šupljine.

Važnost autoimune reakcije u etiopatogenezi OLP-a temelji se na istraživanjima u kojima su opažene promjene u populaciji T-limfocita u perifernoj krvi oboljelih (20). U ovom istraživanju 25 ispitanika s OLP-om (39,68%) nose autoimune bolesti, a u kontrolnoj skupini to navodi samo njih četvero (7,94%) s OLP-om, a dva (3,17%) iz kontrolne skupine. U našem istraživanju nismo dokazali statistički značajnu razliku u vrijednostima upalnih markera (SE-a, CRP-a i L-a) u crvi između ispitanika s OLP-om i onih bez patoloških promjena na sluznici usne šupljine.

Navike svakodnevnog pušenja cigareta i konzumiranja alkoholnih pića nisu pokazale statistički značajne razlike među ispitivanim skupinama. Iako se spomenute navike ne dovode u izravno vezu s razvojem OLP, promjene u koncentraciji CRP-a u plazmi najbolje korelira s vrijednošću SE-a (19). Shahidi i suradnici u svojem istraživanju dokazali su statistički značajnu razliku u vrijednosti CRP-a kod ispitanika s OLP-om (P = 0,001). Istraživanje L. Cigić i njezinih suradnika pokazalo je veću učestalost celijakije kod oboljelih od OLP-a u odnosu prema osobama sa zdravom sluznicom usne šupljine i usporedbi s općom populacijom (21). To potvrđuju i rezultati našeg istraživanja jer je celijakija bila druga najčešća autoimuna bolest kod ispitanika s OLP-om.

Navike svakodnevnog pušenja cigareta i konzumiranja alkoholnih pića nisu pokazale statistički značajne razlike među ispitivanim skupinama. Iako se spomenute navike ne dovode u izravno vezu s razvojem OLP-a, promjene sličnog kliničkog i patohistološkog izgleda katkad mogu biti uzrokovane toksičnim učinkom alkohola i cigareta na oralnu sluznicu. Barbosa i suradnici u svojem istraživanju nismo dokazali statistički značajne razlike u vrijednosti CRP-a kod ispitanika s OLP-om i navedene navike (20). Većina bolesnika s OLP-om bili su nepušači (97,3%) te nisu konzumirali alkohol (20), što je pokazalo i naše istraživanje.

**Zaključak**

Iako se u ovom istraživanju nije pokazala statistički značajna razlika u prosječnim vrijednostima ispitivanih upalnih markera u krvi (S-a, CRP-a, L-a) između oboljelih od OLP-a i ispitanika iz kontrolne skupine, postojala je statistički značajno veća učestalost drugih autoimunih bolesti kod obolje-
OLP-α, the most common of which were cutaneous LP and celiac disease. The statistically significantly higher incidence of other autoimmune diseases in patients with OLP indicates the importance of exclusion of these diagnostic diseases, but also a possible common etiopathogenetic mechanism that needs to be investigated and confirmed by further studies. There was no statistically significant difference between the study groups in daily consumption of cigarettes and alcoholic beverages. This shows that smoking and alcohol are not etiologic factors but factors that contribute to the deterioration of the clinical picture of OLP, therefore, smoking and alcohol consumption habits are not recommended for patients with OLP. Future OLP research should focus on the autoimmune mechanisms of this disease.

Conflict of interest

The authors were in no conflict of interest.

Appendix

The results of this research were presented at the 3rd Congress of the Croatian Society of Oral Medicine and Pathology held on October 16-17, 2018. in Zagreb.

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