

## Primary Sjogren's syndrome, multidisciplinary approach in diagnosis and treatment

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The Scientific Symposium on “Primary Sjogren's syndrome, multidisciplinary approach in diagnosis and treatment” was held in Zagreb, Croatia, on March 10th 2023 in the National Hall of Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and was organized by Department of Medical Sciences of Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (HAZU), Academy of Medical Sciences of Croatia and Global Alliance for musculoskeletal health of Croatian Medical Association.

Organizers of the symposium were Prof. Jadranka Morović-Vergles, MD, PhD and Academician Vida Demarin.

Primary Sjogren's syndrome (pSS), is a chronic and heterogeneous disorder characterized by a wide spectrum of glandular and extraglandular features. It is a systemic autoimmune disease with prevalence ranging from 0,03% to 5% in different countries. Most patients with pSS suffer from dry eyes, dry mouth and fatigue which leads to poor quality of life. In at least one-third of patients, there may be associated extraglandular manifestations (cutaneous, pulmonary, renal, peripheral and central nervous system, articular, muscular and hematological involvement), therefore a multidisciplinary approach in diagnosis and treatment is very important.

The meeting started with a welcome speech by the secretary of the Department of Medical Sciences of HAZU Academician Vida Demarin, who, as co-host of the symposium, opened the meeting by emphasizing the importance of multidisciplinary and team work in medicine.

The beginning of the symposium was marked by the opening lecture of Prof. Jadranka Morović-Vergles, MD, PhD from Dubrava University Hospital under the title “Primary Sjögren's syndrome”, which gave an overview of the etiology, epidemiology, diagnosis and clinical picture of pSS with special reference to the importance of multidisciplinary approach to both diagnosis and treatment of these patients.

Then Prof. Ivan Alajbeg, PhD from the Faculty of Dentistry of the University of Zagreb, in a lecture entitled “Oral cavity in primary Sjögren's syndrome”, spoke about the dry syndrome that often occurs in elderly, that can also be triggered by some medications, and highlighted the peculiarities and differences that characterize pSS. He also stated the indications for a biopsy of minor salivary glands, a minimally invasive procedure performed in the oral clinic at the Faculty of Dentistry.



After that, in the lecture “Aspects of pathological diagnosis of primary Sjögren’s syndrome», associate professor Lovorka Batelja, MD, PhD from the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Zagreb spoke in detail about the importance of pathological diagnosis and the data that the pathohistological analysis of salivary gland biopsies consistent with the diagnosis of pSS must contain. Prim Melanie Ivana Čulo, MD, a rheumatologist from the University Clinic Vuk Vrhovac, in a lecture “Application of ultrasound in the diagnosis of primary Sjögren’s syndrome”, spoke about the importance of an ultrasound examination of the salivary glands by a rheumatologist and further monitoring of the patient.

About the importance of laboratory parameters in the confirmation of diagnosis of pSS spoke Lovorka Đerek, PhD from Dubrava University Hospital in a lecture entitled “Laboratory diagnosis of primary Sjögren’s syndrome», and after that associate professor Ljubo Znaor, PhD from Faculty of Medicine of the University of Split detailed the diagnostic methods and treatment of the eye in pSS in a lecture entitled «The eye in primary Sjögren’s syndrome, diagnostic methods and treatment».

This was followed by a lecture by Academician Vida Demarin entitled “Neurological manifestations in primary Sjögren’s syndrome», in which the manifestations of the central and peripheral nervous system in pSS were presented in detail, along with the methods of treatment.

Professor emerita Dušanka Martinović Kaliterna from the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Split, introduced us to cardiac events in pSS as well as depression and fatigue in these patients in a lecture entitled «Fatigue, depression and cardiac events in primary Sjögren’s syndrome».

Academician Mirna Šitum presented in detail dermatological aspects of this syndrome and methods of treatment in the lecture entitled “Dermatological aspects of primary Sjögren’s syndrome».

In the second part of the symposium, after the break, Prof. Krešimir Galešić, MD, PhD from Dubrava University Hospital spoke about kidney involvement in pSS, which can sometimes be the first manifestation of this syndrome in a lecture entitled “Kidney involvement in primary Sjögren’s syndrome». Then Jasna Tekavec-Trkanjec, PhD from Dubrava University Hospital, spoke about the lung involvement and pulmonary manifestations in pSS in the lecture entitled “Lung involvement in primary Sjögren’s syndrome», and assistant professor Joško Mitrović, MD, PhD from Dubrava University Hospital, in the lecture entitled “Joint involvement and treatment of primary Sjögren’s syndrome», spoke about arthralgias/arthritis in pSS, and also about the treatment of SS in detail, which is primarily in the “hands” of a rheumatologist. At the end of the symposium, Prof. Vlatko Pejša, MD, PhD from Dubrava University Hospital spoke about lymphomas and primary Sjögren’s syndrome in a lecture entitled «Primary Sjögren’s syndrome and lymphomas”.

The symposium ended with a round table discussion in which all participants took part, and it was concluded that a multidisciplinary approach is extremely important, especially in the diagnosis of pSS. In addition to diagnostics, the good cooperation of various specialists in the treatment and follow-up of patients with pSS is no less important, which affects patients’ better quality of life and outcome.

The meeting lasted for 6 hours and 30 minutes.

