

Assignment of Arterial Hypertension with Angiographic Indicators in Progressive Angina Pectoris

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Annotation: To study the state of coronary angiography (CAG) in relation to the presence or absence of arterial hypertension (AH) in unstable progressive angina pectoris (UPA).

Material and methods: A total of 75 patients with PHF were examined, the average age of which was 59.3 ± 8.6 years. The ratio of men and women was 53/22, respectively. All patients underwent percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) with stenting of the coronary arteries. Of all the examined patients, hypertension was present in 90.7% of cases. Three groups were identified: Group 1 - 9.3% of patients without hypertension; Group 2 - 57.3% of patients with hypertension of varying severity and Group 3 - 33.4% of patients with a combination of hypertension and diabetes mellitus (DM), i.e. 90.7% of PHF patients were characterized by the presence of hypertension of varying severity.

Keywords: coronary artery disease, endothelial dysfunction, and coronary atherosclerosis.

Results: The average values of SBP and DBP in group 1 were 115.7 ± 5.3 mmHg and 75.0 ± 5.1 mmHg, respectively; in group 2 - SBP= 148.6 ± 12.1 mmHg and DBP= 94.6 ± 7.6 mmHg; in group 3 - SBP= 145.2 ± 10.1 mmHg and DBP= 93.0 ± 8.3 mmHg. According to CAG data, in patients of group 1, the average values of vascular lesions were 1.29 ± 0.49 units per 1 patient, and the average number of affected segments was 1.29 ± 0.49 units per 1 patient; in group 2, similar data were 1.30 ± 0.64 units. and 1.53 ± 0.91 units, respectively; in group 3 - 1.28 ± 0.46 units and 1.72 ± 1.17 units per 1 patient, respectively, i.e. in patients with hypertension the number of affected segments

was 1.2 times higher than in patients without hypertension, and in patients with a combination of hypertension + diabetes the number of affected segments was 1.4 times higher than in patients of group 1, although the groups did not differ significantly in the number of affected arteries. The reference values of the length of the affected segments on average were 21.7 ± 6.4 mm in group 1, 23.9 ± 8.9 mm in group 2 and 26.5 ± 7.6 mm in group 3, i.e. In patients with hypertension, the average length of atherosclerotic lesions was 2.2 mm greater, and in patients with a combination of hypertension and diabetes mellitus, it was 4.8 mm greater than in patients in group 1. The average percentage of stenosis in the analyzed groups of patients was: in group 1 - $85.4 \pm 7.6\%$; in group 2 - $86.2 \pm 11.9\%$ and in group 3 - $85.7 \pm 10.4\%$, i.e. this indicator was 0.8% greater in patients with hypertension, while in patients with combined pathology there was no significant difference in the values. The average diameter of the affected artery in the analyzed groups of patients was: in group 1 - 3.32 ± 0.31 mm, in group 2 - 3.45 ± 0.44 mm and in group 3 - 3.28 ± 0.29 mm.

Conclusion: Thus, in PHF, the presence of hypertension of varying severity was noted in 90.7% of cases, and in 1/3 of cases, hypertension was combined with carbohydrate metabolism disorder, namely, diabetes mellitus. The presence of hypertension was characterized by a relatively preserved level of the diameter of the affected artery, but a predominance of the number of affected segments per 1 patient and a greater length of atherosclerotic lesions, which confirms the unfavorable effect of hypertension on the X-ray morphological picture of the coronary bed in PHF. The combination of hypertension with diabetes mellitus was characterized by worse values of the above indicators, compared with group 2, which once again emphasizes the need for more careful and attentive attitude to this category of patients.

Since Virchow defined atherosclerosis as "endarteritis deformans" and noted the presence of severe inflammation, the critical function of inflammation in atherosclerosis has long been understood. Since then, a great deal of study has demonstrated that the development of atherosclerosis cannot be explained by cholesterol buildup in blood vessels alone. Accordingly, immunological activities cause, worsen, and accelerate vascular disease, making atherosclerosis a hybrid metabolic and systemic chronic inflammatory condition. This adaptive response involves a complicated network of cytokine signaling between macrophages, lymphocytes, and endothelial cells.

Researchers have tried to determine how inflammatory biomarkers relate to atherosclerosis, to the degree that they can be detected in the bloodstream. The most frequently assessed is probably the high-sensitivity C-reactive protein (hs-CRP), an acute phase reactant protein that is generated in the liver after macrophages and T cells secrete interleukin (IL)-6. Concentrations of CRP are linked to cardiovascular disease regardless of low-density lipoprotein level (LDL-c). In order to manage dyslipidemia and stratify cardiovascular (CV) risk, numerous clinical guidelines have included 3 hs-CRP and other inflammatory markers.

Nevertheless, there are still few therapy approaches that can successfully lower the risk of adverse events by focusing on specific inflammatory pathways, even though a large number of research have attempted to show the link between inflammation and CV illness. The possibility of distribution heterogeneity and the significance of different inflammatory mediators contribute to the difficulty in successfully lowering the risk linked to inflammatory pathway activation in CV disease. In this regard, it may be more instructive to approach the subject from a systems perspective by concurrently evaluating a pool of associated inflammatory biomarkers. In order to tackle this, we sought to ascertain whether inflammatory biomarker patterns of distribution are present in individuals undergoing coronary angiography and whether they are linked to the risk of future major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE; non-fatal myocardial infarction, non-fatal stroke, and CV mortality) using data from samples obtained in the Catheter-Sampled Blood Archive in Cardiovascular Diseases (CASABLANCA) study. Additionally, regardless of cholesterol levels and other traditional risk factors, we want to look into the relationship between each inflammatory biomarker and MACE.

Methods

The Mass General/Brigham Institutional Review Board authorized all study protocols. The work was supported without the use of extramural funds. Study participants and design The CASABLANCA study's design has already been explained (ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier: NCT00842868). Briefly, the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, prospectively included 1,251 patients who underwent peripheral and/or coronary angiography with or without intervention between 2008 and 2011. Acute coronary syndromes, heart failure, abnormal stress tests, stable chest discomfort, claudication, and regular preoperative examination were among the acute and nonacute indications for which patients were referred for angiography. After excluding individuals who only had peripheral angiography ($n = 153$) and those who had missing biomarker level values ($n = 8$), the final sample of research participants ($n = 1,090$) was obtained. Follow-up A review of the medical records from the time of enrollment till the conclusion of the follow-up was conducted. The maximum follow-up period was eight years, with a median of 3.67 years. A review of medical records and phone follow-up with patients and/or management physicians were conducted in order to identify clinical endpoints. Vital status was verified using the Social Security Death Index and/or death notice posts. Each clinical endpoint was determined by a panel of investigators; CASABLANCA's endpoints were already defined in detail. We assessed correlations between inflammation and time to incident MACE (non-fatal myocardial infarction, non-fatal ischemic stroke, and CV death) specifically for this analysis. Testing for biomarkers Prior to the angiographic operation, a centrally located vascular access sheath was used to draw 15 milliliters of blood. The serum and plasma were separated on ice, the blood was centrifuged for 15 minutes, and it was then frozen at -80°C until the biomarker was measured. The study's samples, which came from the baseline blood draw, were examined following the initial freeze-thaw cycle. We assessed myeloperoxidase (MPO; Siemens, Newark, DE) and high sensitivity C-reactive protein (hs-CRP; Siemens, Newark, DE) in this investigation. Additionally, the amounts of the inflammatory markers indicated in Supplemental Table 1 were measured using the Luminex xMAP technology platform (Luminex Corporation, Austin, Texas). By giving each protein-specific assay a distinctive microsphere-based fluorescence signature, the Luminex technique employs multiplexed, microsphere-based assays in a single reaction vessel. Assay-specific detection antibodies and a streptavidin-labeled fluorescent "reporter" molecule are added after assay-specific capture antibodies are covalently conjugated to each distinct set of microspheres and bound to the protein of interest; the bound amount of fluorescence produced is proportionate to the protein level. From each distinct set, a miniature of 100 individual microspheres were examined. Analysis of statistics K-means clustering was employed in unsupervised machine learning to evaluate the clusters of inflammatory biomarker concentrations among research participants. The ideal number of clusters was chosen using the elbow curve method (Supplementary Figure 1). For both continuous and categorical variables, the baseline characteristics of study participants were compared across clusters using the chi-square test and analysis of variance, respectively. 3.3% of the data were missing overall. For data imputation, we employed R's Multivariate Imputation via Chained Equations (MICE) package. We looked into the relationship between each inflammatory cluster and MACE using Cox proportional hazard regression. Age, sex, hypertension, diabetes, chronic renal disease, history of coronary artery disease, low-density lipoprotein, high-density lipoprotein, acute coronary syndrome, and statin use were all taken into account in multivariate models. The selection of variables was predicated on their importance in earlier CASABLANCA sub-studies. The Schoenfeld residual test was used to evaluate the proportional hazard assumption in the Cox model, and all proportionality assumptions were found to be appropriate. Lastly, we used Cox regression with the least absolute shrinkage and selection operator (LASSO) penalization, which can aid in reducing the model's dimensions, to evaluate the most significant inflammatory biomarker linked to MACE. A tenfold cross-validated error plot of the LASSO model was created in order to calculate the penalty factor (λ). By selecting the most parsimonious and regularized model within 1 standard error of the minimum, the ideal λ

was found. Every reported P-value was two-sided. P-values less than .05 were regarded as statistically significant. R 3.6.2 (R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria) was used for all statistical analyses.

Results

The study participants' baseline characteristics and biomarker concentrations are listed in Table I. Four patterns of inflammatory biomarkers were found after clustering; the distribution of inflammatory biomarkers among these four clusters is shown in Supplementary Figure 2. We found that the levels of IL-1a receptor, IL-6, IL-6 receptor, IL-8, IL-12, IL18, fibrinogen, MIPs, MCP, and MCSF-1 significantly increased incrementally from Cluster 1 to Cluster 4. The baseline characteristics of study participants across clusters are described in detail in Table I. Cluster 4, which also tended to have the highest concentrations of inflammatory markers, the high-sensitive cardiac troponin, and NT-proBNP, was the group with the highest prevalence of hypertension, diabetes mellitus, heart failure, coronary artery disease, chronic kidney disease, atrial fibrillation, and prior revascularization. Cluster 4 also had the largest prevalence of acute coronary syndromes, such as unstable angina pectoris or acute myocardial infarction; nevertheless, angiographic data did not differ between clusters (Table II). 263 MACE events, 171 MI events, 124 CV mortality, and 166 all-cause mortality events were determined over a median follow-up period of 3.67 years. The correlation between clusters and worse clinical outcomes is shown in Figure 1. Using cluster 1 as a reference, patients in clusters 2 (HR 1.55, 95% CI 1.01-2.37), 3 (HR 1.89, 95% CI 1.25-2.85), and 4 (HR 3.00, 95% CI 1.95-4.42) had higher risk of MACE in a multivariate model. Notably, clusters 2 and 3 had HR (95% CI) of CV mortality of 3.05 (1.47-6.33) and 2.52 (1.21-5.22), while cluster 4 had an HR of 5.12 (2.52-10.44). Cluster 4 showed a roughly two-fold greater cause-independent risk for death, with similar differences observed in all-cause mortality. The time to incident MACE for each cluster is shown in Figure 2.

Angiography results	Inflammation clusters					P-value
	All (N = 1090)	1 (N = 285)	2 (N = 313)	3 (N = 261)	4 (N = 231)	
All individuals						
≥ 30% coronary stenosis in ≥ 2 vessels	704 (64.6%)	180 (63.2%)	192 (61.3%)	174 (66.7%)	158 (68.4%)	.45
≥ 30% coronary stenosis in ≥ 3 vessels	550 (50.5%)	145 (50.9%)	145 (46.3%)	132 (50.6%)	128 (55.4%)	.35
≥ 50% coronary stenosis in ≥ 2 vessels	572 (52.5%)	150 (52.6%)	148 (47.3%)	143 (54.8%)	131 (56.7%)	.23
≥ 50% coronary stenosis in ≥ 3 vessels	388 (35.6%)	104 (36.5%)	97 (31.0%)	92 (35.2%)	95 (41.1%)	.19
≥70% coronary stenosis in ≥ 2 vessels	438 (40.2%)	108 (37.9%)	117 (37.4%)	114 (43.7%)	99 (42.9%)	.45
≥70% coronary stenosis in ≥ 3 vessels	246 (22.6%)	62 (21.8%)	58 (18.5%)	70 (26.8%)	56 (24.2%)	.19
Acute coronary syndrome (N = 226)		(N = 35)	(N = 66)	(N = 60)	(N = 65)	
≥ 30% coronary stenosis in ≥ 2 vessels	174 (77.0%)	27 (77.1%)	50 (75.8%)	45 (75.0%)	52 (80.0%)	.97
≥ 30% coronary stenosis in ≥ 3 vessels	141 (62.4%)	22 (62.9%)	40 (60.6%)	36 (60.0%)	43 (66.2%)	.96
≥ 50% coronary stenosis in ≥ 2 vessels	138 (61.1%)	23 (65.7%)	35 (53.0%)	37 (61.7%)	43 (66.2%)	.59
≥ 50% coronary stenosis in ≥ 3 vessels	95 (42.0%)	15 (42.9%)	22 (33.3%)	24 (40.0%)	34 (52.3%)	.29
≥70% coronary stenosis in ≥ 2 vessels	107 (47.3%)	15 (42.9%)	27 (40.9%)	30 (50.0%)	35 (53.8%)	.62
≥70% coronary stenosis in ≥ 3 vessels	65 (28.8%)	6 (17.1%)	13 (19.7%)	20 (33.3%)	26 (40.0%)	.04

Type 1 MI (HR 3.01, 95% CI 1.10-8.23) and type 2 MI (HR 3.84, 95% CI 1.98-7.42) incidents were linked to Cluster 4.

Finally, each inflammatory biomarker's adjusted correlation with MACE was assessed and shown in Supplementary Table 3. Even after controlling for non-inflammatory risk variables, a number of inflammatory indicators, such as low and high density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C and HDL-C), were still linked to MACE. The most significant clinical and inflammatory markers linked to MACE based on LASSO regression are shown in Figure 3. The factors most strongly associated with negative outcomes were age, MCSF-1, IL-8, IL-1 α , and the prevalence of diabetes mellitus.

Discussion

Biomarkers, we discovered four trends in the concentrations of biomarkers (Graphical abstract). We were able to demonstrate that several of these inflammatory biomarker clusters had a higher chance of MACE, with a correspondingly higher risk for mortality, especially in those with the highest degrees of inflammation, regardless of lipid profile, traditional CV risk factors, and

presenting syndrome.

Higher levels of MCSF-1, IL-8, and IL-1 α were most strongly linked to a poor prognosis among the 24 inflammatory biomarkers that were assessed. Coronary artery disease is very common and frequently causes morbidity. To reduce the high risk connected with the diagnosis, numerous secondary preventative strategies have been devised. Although the rate of adverse outcomes after a diagnosis of coronary atherosclerosis has decreased due to aggressive reduction of LDL-C, the use of newer diabetes medications that reduce atherothrombotic complications⁷, the use of more intensive anti-thrombotic therapy with strong antiplatelet or low-dose direct oral anticoagulants⁸, and advancements in revascularization techniques, there is still a significant residual risk even after accounting for these traditional risk factors. The high inflammatory status seen in atherosclerosis patients even after they receive the best medical care may be partly responsible for the residual risk.⁹ Although it is widely acknowledged that inflammation plays a part in the onset, advancement, and complications of coronary atherosclerosis, attempts to improve the prognosis of patients with coronary artery disease by focusing on potential inflammatory processes have yielded conflicting findings. However, a number of randomized clinical trials are currently being conducted to examine the effectiveness of anti-inflammatory drugs in atherosclerosis patients.¹⁰ White blood cell-expressed cytokines called interleukins, which facilitate cell-to-cell communication, are prime candidates to control inflammation. Canakinumab, an interleukin-1 β monoclonal antibody, reduced the incidence of recurrent cardiovascular events in patients with a history of MI and a hs-CRP >2 mg/dl, according to the Canakinumab Anti-inflammatory Thrombosis Outcome Study (CANTOS) trial¹¹.

A little further down the line, Ziltivekimab, a novel IL-6 ligand inhibitor, significantly decreased several biomarkers of systemic inflammation and thrombosis that support the atherothrombotic process in a phase II clinical trial of high-risk CV patients. These biomarkers included hs-CRP, fibrinogen, serum amyloid A protein, secretory phospholipase A2, and lipoprotein (a). Finally, two recent randomized clinical trials have shown that colchicine significantly lowers cardiovascular events in patients with chronic coronary disease¹³; data show that colchicine treatment decreased ACS patients' IL-1 β , IL-6, and IL-18 concentrations. This suggests that colchicine may be a useful treatment option for cardiovascular disease.¹⁴ Not all anti-inflammatory studies produced encouraging results, despite encouraging findings on controlling inflammation in CV disease. For instance, in the Cardiovascular Inflammation Reduction Trial¹⁵, low-dose methotrexate was linked to a decrease in white blood cell counts, liver damage, and a higher incidence of non-basal cell skin cancers over a 2.3-year follow-up period than the placebo group, but it did not reduce CV events in patients with stable atherosclerosis. The disparity between these results suggests that a deeper understanding of the intricate cytokine and chemokine signaling networks involved in atherosclerosis is necessary. Identifying and treating those who are most likely to respond favorably may be a more profitable strategy than indiscriminate targeting. As demonstrated by canakinumab in CANTOS, where the best results were obtained by those who showed a change in the inflammasome following treatment,¹⁶ tailoring the use of anti-inflammatory medications may be even more successful. A deeper comprehension of the overall distribution of inflammatory pathways and their respective clinical significance is required in order to answer this question in the best possible way. We aimed to find patterns of distinctive biomarker signatures among research participants having coronary angiography in the CASABLANCA trial in order to more thoroughly investigate this subject. We discovered four clusters among patients who had coronary angiography using 24 inflammatory biomarkers. We found that the levels of inflammatory biomarkers increased gradually from cluster 1 to cluster 4. As a result, these clusters reflect different levels of inflammation. Although the degree of coronary artery disease was equal in most clusters, we found that cluster 4 was more common in patients who had at least 70% or more coronary stenosis in three or more arteries and who had acute coronary syndrome. This finding supports the idea that inflammation plays a role in acute myocardial infarction and suggests that systemic inflammation was activated during the widespread myocardial infarction. Furthermore,

even after controlling for LDL-c concentration, presenting diagnosis, and traditional CV risk factors, inflammatory clusters classified the future CV risk of patients who had coronary angiography. Therefore, this machine learning clustering technique can be used by doctors to evaluate cardiovascular risk in patients undergoing coronary angiography. Even in fully adjusted models, we observed a number of biomarkers linked to MACE on an individual basis, including MCSF-1, IL-8, and IL-1 α . Of all the inflammatory indicators, MCSF-1 was arguably the one most strongly linked to the likelihood of negative consequences. The development of atherosclerosis depends on the proliferation of macrophages within the atherosclerotic plaques, and bench research investigations have shed light on the function of MCSF-1 in plaque growth.¹⁷ Furthermore, clinical research revealed that MCSF-1 is a predictor of increased cardiovascular risk in individuals with acute coronary syndrome and stable angina, maybe as a result of plaque instability.^{18,19} IL-8 recruits and activates neutrophils and monocytes, among other biological actions.²⁰ IL-8 was the sole inflammatory biomarker linked to cardiovascular events on its own in a study that looked at ten of them.²¹ IL-1 α belongs to the interleukin-1 superfamily, which controls and triggers inflammatory reactions in sterile inflammation.²² An increasing amount of bench research has suggested that IL-1 α has a role in the formation of atherosclerotic plaque.²³ Notably, monoclonal antibody therapeutics have been created to target MCSF-1, IL-8, and IL-1 α ; however, the potential of these treatments for CV is yet largely investigated. There are many limitations to our investigation. First, we lacked inflammatory biomarker follow-up measurements. We were unable to differentiate between transitory and persistent inflammation in our investigation, despite prior data demonstrating that those with persistent inflammation had a greater risk of cardiovascular disease. Second, our study population was predominantly male and Caucasian, comprising 93% of the total. It is not possible to evaluate how sex and ethnicity affect the inflammatory profile in this investigation. Third, although hard clustering techniques like k-means offer a practical way to group people and ensure convergence, they might not be as reliable as soft clustering techniques, which allow people to belong to many groups. Fourth, concerning the usage of anti-inflammatory drugs and underlying inflammatory diseases, we lacked information. Confounding the risk of MACE, these conditions may affect the levels of inflammatory biomarkers. Fifth, MACE (CV death, MI, stroke) was our main occurrence. A few non-cardiovascular fatalities that may have been competing events versus MACE happened during the follow-up. The absence of any competitive events may be taken as the reason for our outcomes. Lastly, despite the statistical strength of our work, investigations into the long-term effects of inflammatory phenotypes and external validation are necessary. In summary, we were able to discern distinct inflammatory biomarker distributions among research participants having coronary angiography; these inflammatory "phenotypes" carry particular cardiovascular risks. A higher risk of MACE, CV mortality, and all-cause mortality was linked to increases in IL-1 α , IL-6, IL-8, IL-10, IL-12, IL-18, hs-CRP, ferritin, MPO, MIP1a, MIP 3, and MCSF1, regardless of lipid measurements and other traditional CV risk factors. MCSF-1, IL-8, and IL-1 α all demonstrated substantial prognostic significance in a very parsimonious model.

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