
Farid Zerimech1
Guillemette Huet1,2
Malika Baldyuc3
Pierre Degand1,2

1 Lab de Biochim. Hôpital Huriez Place de Verdun F59037 Lille Cedex, France
2 Unité INSERM no. 16 Place de Verdun F59045 Lille Cedex, France
3 Lab de Biochim. Faculté de Pharmacie Rue du Dr Laguesse 59045 Lille Cedex, France

Xylose, Anti-Gliadin, and Anti-Endomysium Antibodies in Adult Celiac Disease

To the Editor:

The onset of celiac disease in adults is rare. The first symptoms usually appear during childhood (1). Xylose absorption tests have been used to evaluate small-intestinal absorption and to discriminate between normal subjects and patients with proximal intestinal malabsorption. Recently, determinations of serum concentrations of IgA-class anti-endomysium antibodies and of IgA and IgG anti-gliadin antibodies have shown high specificity and sensitivity for gluten-sensitive enteropathy (2).

We have studied a 57-year-old man with enteropathy-associated T-cell lymphoma and four men with adult celiac disease, ages 20 to 44 years, of whom three had iron-deficiency anemia unresponsive to iron therapy, and one had malabsorption. Serum and urine tests were performed 1 and 5 h, respectively, after ingestion of 25 g of xylose (3). Anti-gliadin antibodies were measured by enzyme immunoassay and anti-endomysium titers by immunofluorescence.

Our results (Table 1) demonstrate the usefulness of these tests for adults and constitute a screening method to select patients for whom a biopsy is appropriate. IgA-class anti-gliadin and anti-endomysium antibodies appear to provide the highest sensitivity and specificity in adult celiac disease.

References

Table 1. Xylose and Anti-Gliadin and Anti-Endomysium Antibodies in Five Patients and Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patients</th>
<th>Serum xylose, g/L</th>
<th>Urinary xylose, g/L h</th>
<th>Anti-gliadin, units</th>
<th>Anti-endomysium titer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Celiac disease</td>
<td>&lt;0.1</td>
<td>&lt;2.5</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-cell lymphoma</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other subjects</td>
<td>&gt;2.5</td>
<td>&gt;4.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CLINICAL CHEMISTRY, Vol. 39, No. 8, 1993 1753