

Symptoms of Pain, Fatigue and Self-efficacy in Young Patients With Spondyloarthritis

– A Comparison Between Women and Men

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CONCLUSIONS

A significant proportion of both women and men reported symptoms consistent with chronic widespread pain already at young age.

Women reported in general worse health compared to men, including pain distribution, pain intensity and pain management.



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Background

Studies have shown gender differences in disease specific areas in patients with spondyloarthritis (SpA) but few studies have focused on the younger group of patients.

Objectives

To study self-reported characteristics with regard to pain, fatigue, health status, disease activity, self-efficacy, life style factors, and physical and mental functions in young patients with SpA. A second aim was to study the differences between young women and men with SpA.

Methods

All patients aged 18-36 years (n=210) with SpA were identified through the Skane health care register (Sweden) by searching for ICD-10 codes for SpA between the years 2003-2007. 29% were diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis (AS), 39% with psoriatic arthritis (PsA), and 32% with undifferentiated spondyloarthritis (USpA).

Analysis were based on a questionnaire survey in 2009, including questions concerning pain intensity (NRS 0-10) and pain distribution (pain manikin), fatigue (NRS 0-10), general health (NRS 0-10), disease activity and physical function (BASDAI and BASFI, 0-10), anxiety and depression (HADA and HADD, 0-21), EQ5D (0-1), self-efficacy (ASES 10-100). Body Mass Index (BMI), smoking status and data concerning meeting recommendations of health enhancing physical activity (PA) were also collected.

Patients were categorized into groups; no chronic pain (NCP), chronic regional pain (CRP) or chronic widespread pain (CWP) based in the pain manikin.

Characteristic symptoms were reported as mean, standard deviation (SD) and frequencies. T-test and Chi2 test were used to study gender differences.

Results

- The mean age (SD) was, 30 (5) years, 60% were women. The group reported disease activity scores (BASDAI) of 3.8 (2.3), health status 0.76 (0.16) and a disease duration of 7 (5) years (table 1 and 2).
- Women reported worse pain, more fatigue, impaired general health, higher disease activity, lower physical function, and less self-efficacy compared to men (table 2).
- No differences were found concerning mental health status, and frequencies in meeting recommendations of PA (table 2).
- In total, 21% reported CRP, 41% CWP and the remaining 38% reported NCP. More women reported CWP pain than men (p= 0.026) (table 2).

Tabell 1. Demographics and characteristics for all, stratified for women and men and for different subtypes of spondyloarthritis

	All n = 210	Women n = 126	Men n = 84	AS n = 61	PsA n = 81	USpA n = 68
Age, years	30 (4.6)	30 (4.6)	31 (4.6)	31 (4.3)	29 (5.5)	31 (3.7)
Disease duration, years	6.7 (4.9)	6.4 (4.7)	7.0 (5.2)	7.0 (4.9)	7.2 (5.6)	5.8 (4.0)
Symp-diagnosis, years ¹	3.7 (4.3)	4.3 (4.9)	2.8 (3.2)	4.6 (3.9)	3.0 (4.0)	3.6 (5.0)
BMI ²	25 (4.8)	24 (5.1)	26 (4.2)	24 (3.4)	25 (5.2)	25 (5.3)
Education level ³ > 12 år . antal	97 (46%)	58 (46%)	39 (47%)	37 (61%)	24 (30%)	36 (53%)

¹Years between first symptoms and diagnosis ²Body Mass Index ³ Number and percentage with a level of education > 12 year

Tabell 2. Self-reported health for all, and stratified for women and men

	All	Women	Men	P - value
Pain (NRS 0 – 10)	3.5 (2.4)	3.9 (2.4)	2.8 (2.1)	0.001
Fatigue (NRS 0 – 10)	4.5 (2.7)	5.0 (2.6)	3.9 (2.7)	0.003
General health (NRS 0 – 10)	3.5 (2.2)	3.9 (2.1)	2.9 (2.1)	0.001
BASDAI ¹ (0 – 10)	3.8 (2.3)	4.2 (2.2)	3.2 (2.3)	0.008
BASFI ² (0 – 10)	2.1 (2.0)	2.4 (2.0)	1.5 (2.0)	0.002
EQ-5D ³ (0 – 1)	0.76 (0.16)	0.75 (0.15)	0.79 (0.17)	0.069
HADA ⁴ (0 -21)	5.9 (4.0)	6.2 (3.9)	5.5 (4.1)	0.240
HADD ⁵ (0 – 21)	3.7 (3.3)	3.7 (3.1)	3.6 (3.5)	0.729
ASES ⁶ pain (10 – 100)	56 (21)	53 (20)	59 (21)	0.040
ASES ⁶ symptoms (10 – 100)	61 (20)	59 (19)	65 (20)	0.038
Non-smokers, %	143 (68%)	77 (61%)	66 (79%)	0.008
Meeting rec PA ⁷	143 (69%)	81 (65%)	62 (74%)	0.195
NCP ⁸ / CRP ⁹ / CWP ¹⁰ , %	38/ 21/ 41	31/ 21/ 48	48/ 22/ 30	0.026

Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Indices for self-reported ¹disease activity and ²function. ³EuroQol-5-domain. Hospital Anxiety and Depression scale for ⁴anxiety and ⁵depression. ⁶Arthritis Self-Efficacy Scale, (low – high). ⁷Meeting recommendations of health-enhancing physical activity. ⁸No chronic pain (NCP), ⁹Chronic regional pain (CRP), ¹⁰Chronic widespread pain (CWP).

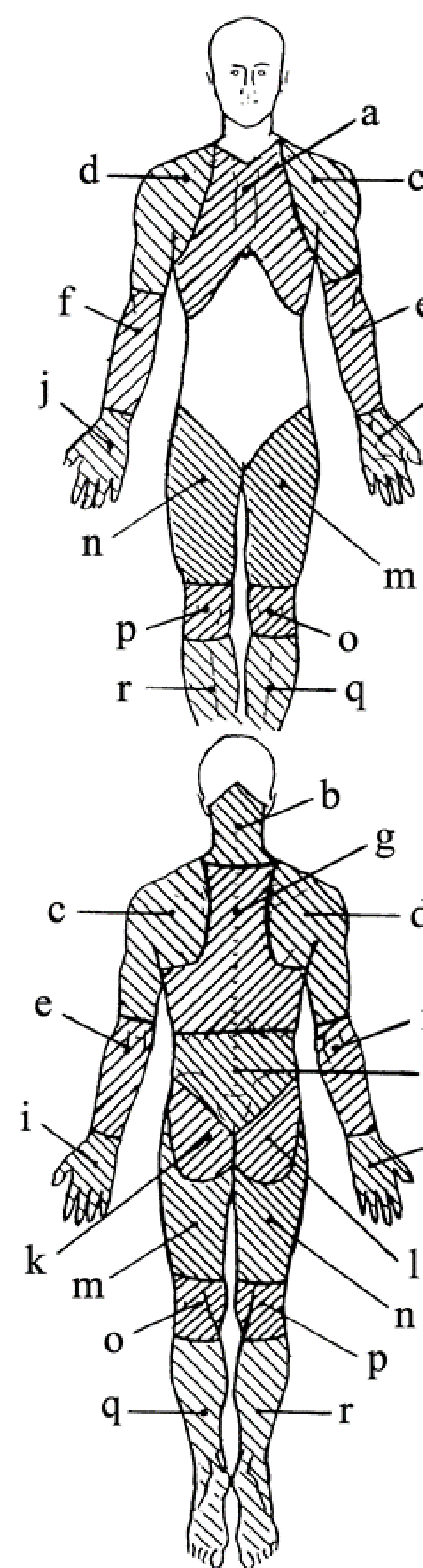


Figure 1. Pain manikin