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ABSTRACTS

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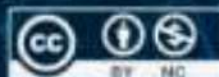
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CONGRESO PANAMERICANO DE REUMATOLOGIA
PAN-AMERICAN CONGRESS OF RHEUMATOLOGY
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Infections (including COVID-19)

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Presence Of Autoantibodies Following Sars-Cov-2 Infection And Prolonged Symptoms.

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Has this paper been previously presented at another conference?: No

Background/Objectives: Since the emergence of COVID-19, there have been case reports with development of autoimmune or autoinflammatory conditions following acute infection. SARS-CoV-2 has the ability to induce a state of hyperstimulation with increased synthesis of multiple autoantibodies, demonstrated in different studies evaluating the presence of autoantibodies. This systemic autoreactivity suggests autoimmune activation during and/or following SARS-CoV-2 infection. The persistent positivity of autoantibodies has led to the conclusion that, in a group of people, production is maintained and may lead to the symptoms of long COVID. Our study evaluated the presence of post-COVID-19 symptoms and autoantibody positivity in convalescents.

Methods: It was a prospective, cross-sectional study. Patients older than 18 years, with more than 1 month and less than 12 months from the last infection and no history of autoimmune disease were included. A survey was conducted on the presence of symptoms following COVID-19 and a blood sample was taken for serum. Anticellular antibodies (ANA) were performed by indirect immunofluorescence and antiphospholipid antibodies (APA) were obtained by linear immunoassay. Excel and Prism9 were used for compilation and statistical analysis.

Results: Thirty-five serum samples were obtained, distributed in 25 female samples (71%) and 10 male samples (29%). The mean age was 49.6 years. Of the symptoms reported, neuropsychiatric symptoms were the most frequently observed with 18 patients (51%), followed by cardiopulmonary with 16 (46%), musculoskeletal and gastrointestinal each with 14 patients (40%); only a statistically significant difference was found between sex and the report of myalgias (Figure 1). Regarding autoantibodies, all patients had at least one autoantibody positive. ANA were present in 22 patients (63%) and positive antiphospholipid antibodies in 27 patients (77%). In the relationship between symptoms and autoantibody positivity, we found that neuropsychiatric symptoms were positive for ANA an APA in 78%, gastrointestinal symptoms were ANA positive in 86% and APA 82%, for musculoskeletal symptoms we found positivity for ANA in 64% and APA in 75% (Figure 2).

Image 1:

FIGURE 1. NEW SYMPTOMS AFTER SARS-COV-2 INFECTION

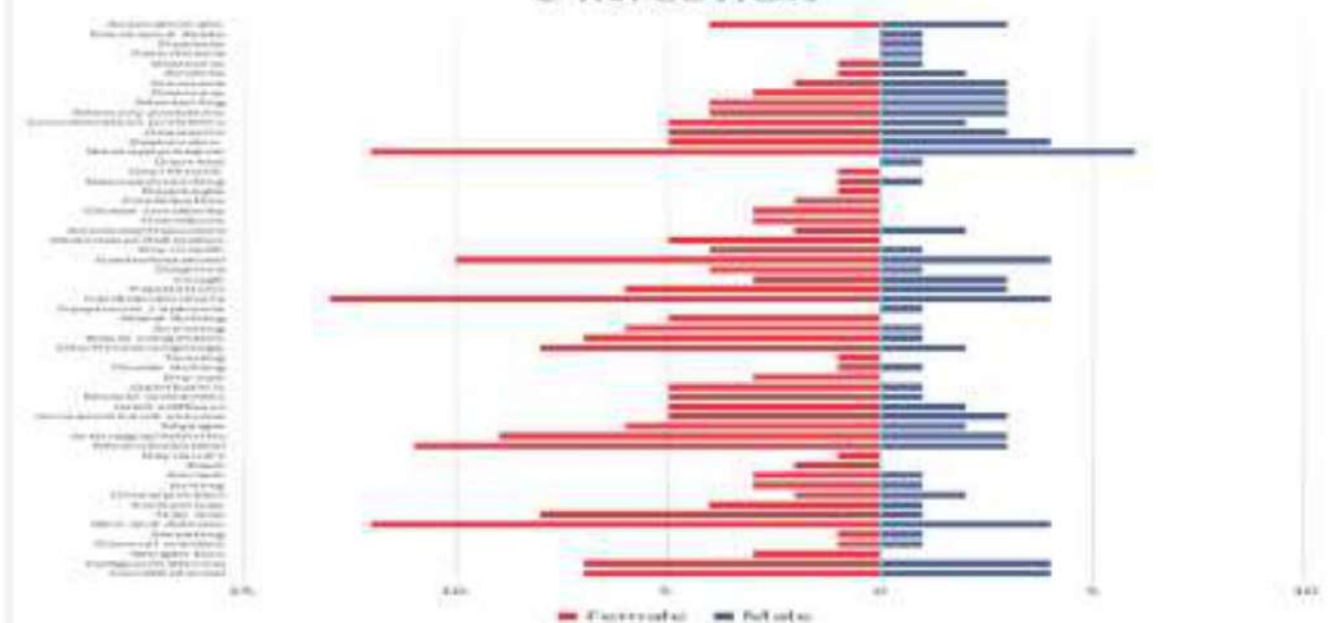
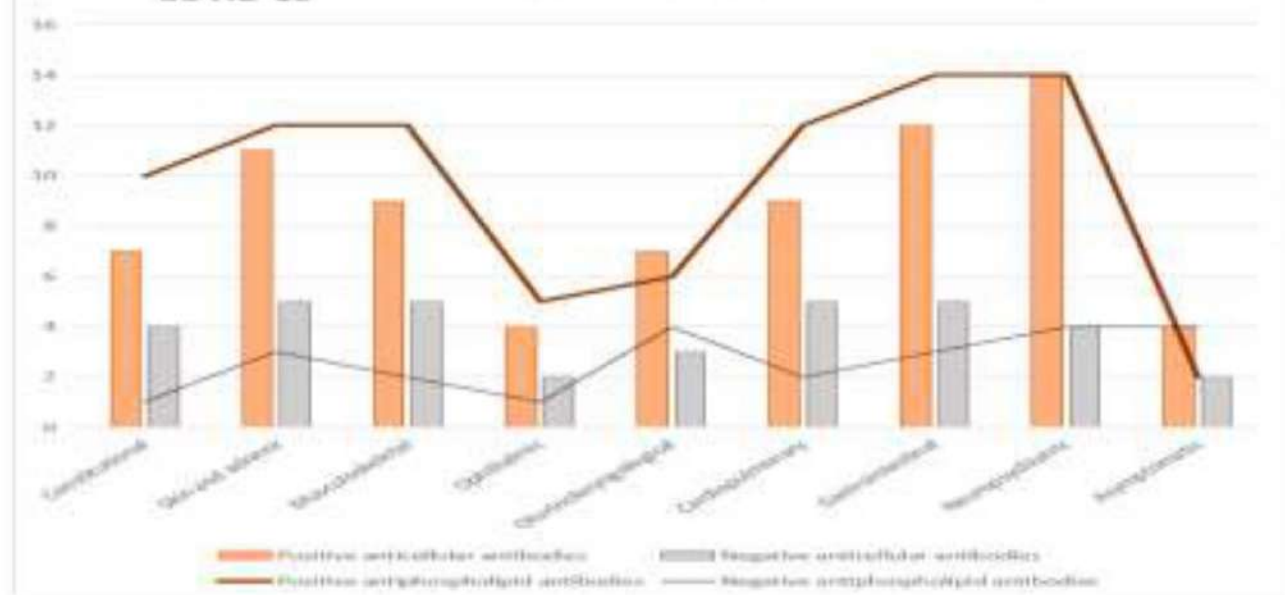


Image 2:

Figure 2. Autoantibody positivity in people convalescing from COVID-19



Conclusion: COVID-19 has the capacity to generate autoantibodies post-infection, which may be associated with the appearance and/or persistence of symptomatology, with the probable subsequent appearance of new autoimmune diseases.

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared

Keywords: autoantibodies, COVID-19, Long COVID