Response to: 'Antisynthetase syndrome or what else? Different perspectives indicate the need for new classification criteria' by Cavagna et al

Lilleker, James B; Vencovsky, Jiri; Wang, Guochun; Wedderburn, Lucy R; Diederichsen, Louise P; Schmidt, Jens; Jordan, Paula; Benveniste, Olivier; Daniele, Maria Giovanna; Dankó, Katalin; Phuong Thuy, Nguyen Thi; Mercado, Monica Vázquez-Del; Andersson, Helena; Paepe, Boel De; De Bleecker, Jan L; Maurer, Britta; McCann, Liza J; Pipitone, Nicolo; McHugh, Neil; Betteridge, Zoe; New, Paul; Cooper, Robert G; Ollier, William E; Lamb, Janine A; Krogh, Niels Steen; Lundberg, Ingrid E; Chinoy, Hector; all EuroMyositis contributors

Published in:
Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases

DOI:
10.1136/annrheumdis-2017-212382

Publication date:
2018

Document version
Peer reviewed version

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain.
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

Take down policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim. Please direct all enquiries to puresupport@bib.sdu.dk

Download date: 15. Aug. 2019
Dear Editor,

We thank Cavagna et al for their thoughtful analysis relating to our recent publication.[1] Several important points are raised, many of which we also referred to. It is of great interest and reassurance that the demographics and clinical features of anti-synthetase syndrome (ASS) are broadly similar between the AENEAS (American and European NEtwork of Anti-Synthetase syndrome) and EuroMyositis cohorts. Clearly the frequency of interstitial lung disease and arthritis differs due to the sources of case ascertainment. This highlights the importance when evaluating the natural history and demographics of a disease presenting with heterogeneity, that one must use more than one source of case ascertainment.

The paradigm of classification of the idiopathic inflammatory myopathies (IIM), particularly with regards to ASS, is a subject of much debate. This reflects of our developing understanding of these disorders and the growing agreement regarding the importance of autoantibody status in determining a phenotype. One interesting unanswered question relates to the heterogeneity within the ASS spectrum and the underlying mechanisms that explain why certain anti-synthetase antibodies (ASAs) are associated with certain clinical phenotypes. We also agree that if the shift towards disease definition according to clinic-serological syndrome is to continue, harmonisation of antibody testing methodologies is required. However, exceptions are clearly required for patients displaying typical clinical features of ASS, but without a detectable ASAs, in some cases almost certainly the consequence of the presence of a hitherto unrecognised antibody or the limitations of current antibody testing methodologies.

To develop a well-rounded knowledge of ASS, future collaboration across multiple disease specialities is vital. Together with other groups such as the International Myositis Assessment and Clinical Studies Group (IMACS, https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/imacs/index.cfm) and the European Reference Network for Rare Diseases (ERN), future standardised classification criteria will be developed. We agree that the presence of skeletal muscle inflammation should not be a prerequisite for the diagnosis of ASS and that labelling such patients as having an IIM is becoming less intuitive. More accurate clinico-serological criteria will allow more homogenous participant groups in research studies, and in the future, allow for more targeted therapies.

We look forward to broadening the existing collaboration between our groups, facilitated through the recently awarded Foundation for Research in Rheumatology (FOREUM) grant (http://www.foreum.org/prg_13_myositis_transition.cfm). It is only with such collaborative efforts that we can advance our search for a more accurate diagnosis and better treatment options in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Hector Chinoy

On behalf of all co-authors[1]
References