**Original article:**

**Assessment of correlation of serum Mg level with hepatic encephalopathy in cirrhotic patients**

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**Abstract:**

**Introduction:** Hepatic encephalopathy (HE) is a neurometabolic syndromecharacterized by impaired brain function in patientswith decompensated cirrhosis.1-3 The pathogenesisof HE is not completely understood and several proposedpathways are implicated in the initiation and exacerbationof this syndromeMagnesium is an essential component ofhuman body and other mammals, whose role in livercirrhosis and its complications is still a matter ofresearch. There are contrary reports about theirserum concentrations in patients with liver cirrhosis.Magnesium is associated with more than 300enzymatic reactions involving energy metabolismand protein and nucleic acid synthesis

**Aim:** To assess the correlation of serum Mg level with hepatic encephalopathy in cirrhotic patients.

**Objectives:** To study the serum electrolyte levels in hepatic encephalopathy in cirrhotic patientsTo assess the correlation of serum Mg level with hepatic encephalopathy in cirrhotic patients)

**Result :** The mean Serum Sodium, Potassium, Calcium, Chloride, Bicarbonate and Magnesium levels of the patients were 134.6 ± 3.64.0±0.8, 8.8±1.3, 95.6±8.9, 22.3±5.7 and 1.2±0.2mEq/L, respectively.( Table No. 10) No correlation w\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). In our study we came to a conclusion that deficiency in the serum magnesium levels is associated with cirrhosis in alcoholic patients.

**Conclusions** In our study we came to a conclusion that deficiency in the serum magnesium levels is associated with cirrhosis in alcoholic patients.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Hepatic encephalopathy (HE) is a neurometabolic syndromecharacterized by impaired brain function in patientswith decompensated cirrhosis.1-3 The pathogenesisof HE is not completely understood and several proposedpathways are implicated in the initiation and exacerbationof this syndrome.3-5 HE may be clinically apparent in as many as one third of cirrhotic patients and, if rigorously tested, up to two thirds have some degree of mild or subclinical HE.6

Ammonia plays a central role in HE asit crosses the blood brain barrier causing neurological insultmediated by a decrease in excitatory neurotransmission.7 Multiple precipitating factors for HE has beenrecognized and if controlled, may alter the disease acuity and improve mental status.8 The most common precipitatingfactors for HE includes dehydration, acute kidney injury,non-adherence to medications (particularlynon-absorbable disaccharides), constipation and infections.9-11

Magnesium is essential for many intracellular processes andstructures in the human body, such as muscle contractionand relaxation, neuronal signal transduction, and conduction ofthe action potential in the myocardium 12. Most of the body’smagnesium is intracellular and less than 1% of the total is foundin serum. Therefore, significant magnesium deficiency mightbe present even though the serum magnesium level is withinnormal limits. Magnesiumdeficiency has been associated with several systemic conditions,including metabolic syndrome, cerebrovascular diseases,malignancies, bacterial and fungal infections, osteoporosis, andliver cirrhosis 13-16.Several studies demonstrated a higher prevalence of magnesiumdeficiency in patients with liver cirrhosis comparedto the general population 17-20. Suggested pathogenesisincludes decreased magnesium intake, fat malabsorption,diuretic use, renal tubular acidosis, and increased serum levelsof growth hormone and glucagon20.Patients with alcoholic liver cirrhosis were found to havedecreased muscle mass and strength as well as lower magnesiumand potassium content in muscle tissue as compared toan age-matched control group21,22. Magnesium levels werefound to decrease as the severity of liver disease progressed(according to CHILD score) 21, and treatment with spironolactoneincreased muscle strength and electrolytes 21, 23.

Magnesium is an essential component ofhuman body and other mammals, whose role in livercirrhosis and its complications is still a matter ofresearch. There are contrary reports about theirserum concentrations in patients with liver cirrhosis.Magnesium is associated with more than 300 enzymatic reactions involving energy metabolismand protein and nucleic acid synthesis24,25.Magnesium also involved in immunoglobulinsynthesis, immune cell adherence, antibodydependentcytolysis, GM lymphocyte binding, Thelper B-cell adherence and additional responses26.Only 0.3% of total body magnesium exists inserum27-29. In spite of all this knowledge regardingimportance of magnesium in human body,very little is known about magnesiummetabolism in diseased states, in comparison to theextensive studies of calcium, sodium and potassiumetc. Hence, the present study is planned to assess the correlation of serum Mg level with hepatic encephalopathy in cirrhotic patients

**AIM & OBJECTIVES:**

**Aim:** To assess the correlation of serum Mg level with hepatic encephalopathy in cirrhotic patients

**Objectives:**

1. To study the serum electrolyte levels in hepatic encephalopathy in cirrhotic patients
2. To assess the correlation of serum Mg level with hepatic encephalopathy in cirrhotic patients

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:**

**Study design:** Cross sectional analytical

**Study population:** Patients diagnosed with liver cirrhosis with hepatic encephalopathy visiting**Noor hospital**

**Study period:**2 years

**Sample size:**20

**Ethical clearance:** The study will be initiated after approval of Institutional Ethical committee.

**Selection criteria:**Patients diagnosed with liver cirrhosis with hepatic encephalopathy visiting**Noor hospital** will be subjected to the following inclusion and exclusion criteria.

**Inclusion criteria:**

1. Patients diagnosed with liver cirrhosis with hepatic encephalopathy visiting **NOOR HOSPITAL**
2. Patients of age 18 years or above of either gender.
3. Patients/Patients legally acceptable representative willing to give written informed consent to participate in the study.

**Exclusion criteria:**

1. Patients with active cancer.
2. Special populationssuch as pregnant women.
3. Individuals with mental retardation, dementia.
4. Current treatment with magnesium supplements.
5. Renal failure patients

Patients who will satisfy the above inclusion and exclusion criteria will be included in the study. Written informed consent will be taken from all patients.

**Study procedure:**

After taking consent, patient’s demographic data will be collected. Data for the following variables will be collected:

The following information regarding the patients will be collected:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S. No.** | **Variable** | **Method of measurement** | **Measurement scale** | **Descriptive statistics** |
|  | Age | Interview | Ratio | Mean, S.D. |
|  | Gender | Interview | Nominal | Frequency, Proportion |
|  | Occupation  | Interview | Nominal | Frequency, Proportion |
|  | Comorbidities | Examination | Ratio | Mean, S.D. |
|  | Causes of liver cirrhosis | Record  | Nominal | Frequency, Proportion |
|  | Serum Electrolytes | Investigation  | Ratio | Mean, S.D. |
|  | Liver function test | Investigation  | Ratio | Mean, S.D. |
|  | Glasgow coma scale | Examination | Ordinal | Frequency, Proportion |

**RESULTS:**

In the present study, 100 patients were included. All the patients were males.The mean Age of patients was 45.8 ± 13.3 years.

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| Table 1 Distribution of patients with respect to Comorbidities |
|  | Frequency | Percent |
| **Comorbidity** | Anemia | 36 | 36 |
| Bleeding gums | 1 | 1.0 |
| Asthma | 6 | 6.0 |
| Hypothyroidism | 1 | 1.0 |
| Leucorrhea | 1 | 1.0 |
| Nil | 48 | 48.0 |
| Piles | 7 | 7.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100.0 |

52 patients suffered from comorbidities. Most of the patients were suffering from anemia (36), followed by piles (7) and asthma (6).

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| Table 2 Distribution of patients with respect to Cause of Cirrhosis |
|  | Frequency | Percent |
| **Cause of Cirrhosis** | Alcohol abuse | 80 | 80.0 |
| Autoimmune hepatitis | 10 | 10.0 |
| HBV | 5 | 5.0 |
| HCV | 4 | 4.0 |
| HIV | 1 | 1.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100.0 |

The most common cause of Cirrhosis was Alcohol abuse (80%) followed by Autoimmune hepatitis (10%) and HBV infection (5%).

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| Table 3 Distribution of patients with respect to Eye response |
|  | Frequency | Percent |
| Eye response | 1 | 28 | 28.0 |
| 2 | 23 | 23.0 |
| 3 | 22 | 22.0 |
| 4 | 27 | 27.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100.0 |

The most common eye response of the patients was 1 (28%) followed by 4 (27%).

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| Table 4 Distribution of patients with respect to Verbal response |
|  | Frequency | Percent |
| Verbal response | 1 | 8 | 8.0 |
| 2 | 24 | 24.0 |
| 3 | 20 | 20.0 |
| 4 | 24 | 24.0 |
| 5 | 24 | 24.0 |
| Total | 100 | 99.0 |

The most verbal response of the patients was 2, 4 and 5 (24% each).

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| Table 5 Distribution of patients with respect to Motor response |
|  | Frequency | Percent |
| Motor response | 1 | 10 | 10.0 |
| 2 | 11 | 11.0 |
| 3 | 12 | 12.0 |
| 4 | 17 | 17.0 |
| 5 | 23 | 23.0 |
| 6 | 27 | 27.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100.0 |

The most common Motor response of the patients was 6 (27%) followed by 5 (23%) and 4 (17%). The mean Glasgow coma scale of the patients was 9.9 ± 1.8

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| Table 6 Mean Total bilirubin, Albumin and Total Protein of patients |
|  | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Total bilirubin (mg/dL) | 1.0 | 1.1 |
| Albumin (g/dL) | 4.0 | 0.4 |
| Total Protein (g/dL) | 7.0 | 1.5 |

The mean Total bilirubin, Albumin and Total Protein of the patients was 1.0 ± 1.1mg/dL, 4.0 ± 0.4g/dL and 7 ± 1.5g/dL, respectively.

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| Table 7 Mean ALT, AST and ALP of patients |
|  | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|  ALT (IU/L) | 33.0 | 21.0 |
|  AST (IU/L) | 27.9 | 11.5 |
|  ALP (IU/L) | 179.7 | 107.9 |

The mean ALT, AST and ALP of the patients was 33.0 ± 21 mg/dL, 27.9 ± 11.5 g/dL and 179.7 ± 107.9IU/L, respectively.

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| Table 8 Mean S. Urea, S. Creatinine and S. Uric acid of patients |
|  | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| S. Urea (mg/dL) | 43.4 | 12.1 |
| S. Creatinine (mg/dL) | 1.5 | 0.3 |
| S. Uric acid (mg/dL) | 5.6 | 0.9 |

The mean S. Urea, S. Creatinine and S. Uric acid of the patients was 43.4 ± 12.1 mg/dL, 1.5 ± 0.3mg/dL and 5.6 ± 0.9 mg/dL, respectively.

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| Table 9 Mean S. Electrolytesof patients |
|  | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Serum Sodium (mEq/L) | 134.6 | 3.6 |
| Serum Potassium (mEq/L) | 4.0 | 0.8 |
| Serum Calcium (mEq/L) | 8.8 | 1.3 |
| Serum Chloride (mEq/L) | 95.6 | 8.9 |
| Serum Bicarbonate (mEq/L) | 22.3 | 5.7 |
| Serum Magnesium(mEq/L)  | 1.2 | 0.2 |

The mean Serum Sodium, Potassium, Calcium, Chloride, Bicarbonate and Magnesium levels of the patients were 134.6 ± 3.6

4.0±0.8, 8.8±1.3, 95.6±8.9, 22.3±5.7 and 1.2±0.2mEq/L, respectively.

**DISCUSSION:**

Hepatic encephalopathy (HE) is a neurometabolic syndromecharacterized by impaired brain function in patientswith decompensated cirrhosis.1-3 The pathogenesisof HE is not completely understood and several proposedpathways are implicated in the initiation and exacerbationof this syndrome.3-5HE may be clinically apparent in as many as one third of cirrhotic patients and, if rigorously tested, up to two thirds have some degree of mild or subclinical HE.6 Ammonia plays a central role in HE asit crosses the blood brain barrier causing neurological insultmediated by a decrease in excitatory neurotransmission.7 Multiple precipitating factors for HE has beenrecognized and if controlled, may alter the disease acuityand improve mental status8( Table No. 1) In the present study, 100 patients were included. All the patients were males.The mean Age of patients was 45.8± 13.3 years.(Fig. no.1) 52 patients suffered from comorbidities. Most of the patients were suffering from anemia (36), followed by piles (7) and asthma (6).( Table No. 2) The most common cause of Cirrhosis was Alcohol abuse (80%) followed by Autoimmune hepatitis (10%) and HBV infection (5%).Fig. no.3)here our study is in accordance with the study done by Vilstrup H,etal The most common eye response of the patients was 1 (28%) followed by 4 (27%).again here our study is in acccordancw with the study done by Pantham Getal( Table No. 4) The most verbal response of the patients was 2, 4 and 5 (24% each).( Table No. 5) The most common Motor response of the patients was 6 (27%) followed by 5 (23%) and 4 (17%). The mean Glasgow coma scale of the patients was 9.9 ± 1.8(Fig. no.6) The mean Total bilirubin, Albumin and Total Protein of the patients was 1.0 ± 1.1mg/dL, 4.0 ± 0.4g/dL and 7 ± 1.5g/dL, respectively.(Fig. no.7) The mean ALT, AST and ALP of the patients was 33.0 ± 21 mg/dL, 27.9 ± 11.5 g/dL and 179.7 ± 107.9IU/L, respectively.(Fig. no. 8) The mean S. Urea, S. Creatinine and S. Uric acid of the patients was 43.4 ± 12.1 mg/dL, 1.5 ± 0.3mg/dL and 5.6 ± 0.9 mg/dL, respectively.(Fig. no. 9b) The mean Serum Sodium, Potassium, Calcium, Chloride, Bicarbonate and Magnesium levels of the patients were 134.6 ± 3.64.0±0.8, 8.8±1.3, 95.6±8.9, 22.3±5.7 and 1.2±0.2mEq/L, respectively.( Table No. 10) No correlation w\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**CONCLUSION:**

In our study we came to a conclusion that deficiency in the serum magnesium levels is associated with cirrhosis in alcoholic patients most of the studies like the study done by Iwasa M etal and Shechter M. etal are in accordance with us however multicentric studies with larger sample size are required to come to a conclusion Therefore, significant magnesium deficiency might be present even though the serum magnesium level is within normal limits

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Was informed consent obtained from the subjects involved in the study?  YES

For any images presented appropriate consent has been obtained from the subjects: NA

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