

Scheuermann's Disease in Old Men is Not Associated with More Back and/or Neck Pain

Anette Jönsson¹, Henrik Damm¹, Mehrsa Hofvander¹, Björn Rosengren¹, Inga Redlund-Johnell¹, Claes Ohlsson², Dan Mellström³, Magnus Karlsson¹

¹ Clinical and Molecular Osteoporosis Research Unit, Departments of Orthopedics and Clinical Sciences, Lund University, Skåne University Hospital, Malmö, Sweden

² Center for Bone Research, Departments of Internal Medicine and Geriatrics, Gothenburg University, Sahlgrenska University Hospital Sweden

³ Departments of Internal Medicine and Geriatrics, Gothenburg University, Sahlgrenska University Hospital Sweden

Abstract

Introduction At young age, Scheuermann's disease has been associated to a higher risk of low/moderate neck and/or back pain. Some reports also suggest that Scheuermann's kyphosis may progress over time and lead to increased morbidity. Our aim was therefore to evaluate the prevalence of Scheuermann's disease in old age and the associated morbidity.

Materials and methods Mister Osteoporotic Fractures in Men (MrOs) Sweden (n=3014) is a population based prospective observational study of community-living men aged 69-81 years. At baseline participant answered a questionnaire including history of neck and back pain during the preceding year, if the back pain was severe, radiating and if neurological deficits were present. 1453 of the men had a lateral thoracic/lumbar spine radiograph taken. In this study we included the 1417 men with readable radiographs. Scheuermann's disease was defined as 3 or more consecutive vertebrae with >5 degrees wedging.

Results 92/1417 men (7%) had Scheuermann's disease. 31% of men with and 31% of men without Scheuermann's disease reported neck pain (p=0.90) and 51% respectively 55% back pain (p=0.43). Among men with Scheuermann's disease and back pain, none reported severe pain, 57% moderate and 43% mild, compared to 7%, 50%, and 44% in those without Scheuermann's disease (P=0.15). 63% men with Scheuermann's disease and pain reported no sciatica, 15% sciatica without neurological deficits and 22% sciatica with neurological deficits, compared to 56%, 16%, and 28% in those without Scheuermann's disease (P=0.58).

Conclusion In old men, the prevalence of Scheuermann's disease is 7% and the condition does not seem to be a risk factor for neck and/or back pain.