Prevalence and characteristics of early axial spondyloarthritis, among patients newly presenting to rheumatology – data from the BSRBR-AS

Key finding

Two-thirds of patients with axSpA are already beyond 'early' disease by the time they receive a diagnosis

ASAS Assessment of SpondyloArthritis international Society

January 2023, formal definition of early axial spondyloarthritis:

Patients with a diagnosis of axSpA, with duration of axial symptoms of ≤2yrs

We aimed to determine:
- The prevalence of early axSpA; and
- Whether patients with early (vs late) axSpA differ in terms of clinical and patient-reported characteristics

British Society for Rheumatology — Ankylosing Spondylitis Register

>2500 patients with axSpA, all naïve to biologic therapy

Current analysis = Only participants recruited on the day they were diagnosed

Data collection:
- Clinical data, from medical notes, and
- Participants questionnaires

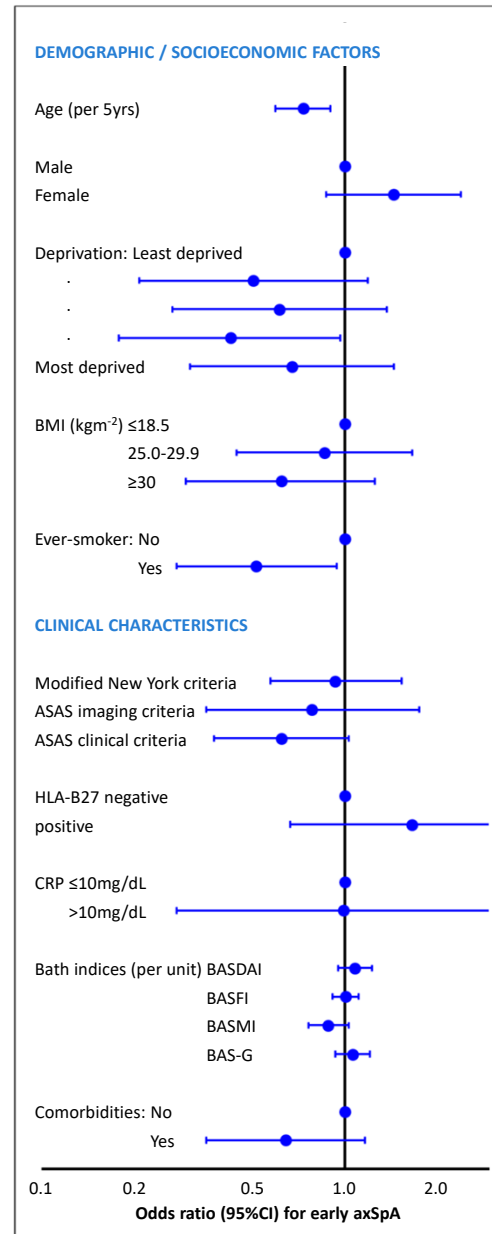From 270 participants, 96 (36%) with symptom onset ≤2yrs

Some evidence that patients more likely to have early axSpA at first presentation were
- Younger
- Less deprived
- Lower BMI
- Non-smokers

But between groups there were no large or significant differences in clinical characteristics (see Figure)

There was no difference in the proportion of participants commencing biologic therapy (odds ratio: 1.33; 0.81-2.21)

Factors associated with early axSpA

DEMOGRAPHIC / SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

Age (per 5yrs)
Male
Female
Deprivation: Least deprived
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.
.
Most deprived
BMI (kgm^{-2}) ≤18.5
25.0-29.9
≥30
Ever-smoker: No
Yes

CLINICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Modified New York criteria
ASAS imaging criteria
ASAS clinical criteria
HLA-B27 negative
positive
CRP ≤10mg/dL
>10mg/dL
Bath indices (per unit) BASDAI
BASFI
BASMI
BAS-G
Comorbidities: No
Yes

Odds ratio (95%CI) for early axSpA

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