

LETTER TO EDITOR

Re: Towards a deeper understanding of the dynamics of COVID-19-associated Guillain-Barre syndrome

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This LETTER TO EDITOR refers to

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Dear Editor,

We appreciate the interest regarding “SARS-CoV-2-associated Guillain-Barré syndrome is a para-infectious disease”¹ by Dr. Jolobe (QJM-2021-946#).

We identified a total of 44 GBS patients with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection (SARS-CoV-2-GBS), which were published between January 1, 2020 and June 26. While, the research by Sheikh and his colleagues included GBS associated with COVID-19 articles published from January 1st 2020 to September 15th 2020².

After carefully examined the Supplementary data to this article², we found that a total of 52 (52/94,55.3%) other than 81 subjects by Dr. Jolobe (QJM-2021-946) definite cases of SARS-CoV-2 infection were confirmed by a positive real-time reverse transcriptase-polymerase-chain-reaction (RT-PCR) (derived from nasopharyngeal swabs and from oropharyngeal samples). The diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection was made by positive RT-PCR of nasopharyngeal swab in 32 (72.7%) in our study¹, which is more higher than that in this study². The diagnosis was confirmed by serological testing in 5 (11.4%) of the 44 cases in our study¹. In fact, there are 8 patients (8.5%,8/94), other than 5 patients referred by Dr. Jolobe, of the 94 subjects were diagnosed by serological evaluation in the study by Sheikh and his colleagues². Because we found they omitted three cases confirmed by serological testing³⁻⁵. 8.5% (8 cases) is nearly relative close to our 11.4% (5 cases)¹.

RT-PCR testing was used as a preferred testing or conditional recommendation in many guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19⁶. As we know, negative RT-PCR testing result may rule out active Covid-19 infection, but we can not rule out the diagnosis of COVID-19 at the same time. In clinical practice, there is a possibility that RT-PCR test is positive after recurrent test. This study⁷ may present an epidemiological study to monitor development of GBS and associated neurological disorders among acute/chronic COVID-19 patients as reported by Zika virus, showing an increased incidence of GBS during the COVID-19 outbreak in northern Italy, supporting a pathogenic link.

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6 corresponding author

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