

Ulcerative colitis in children and adolescents from the Western Region of Saudi Arabia

To the Editor

It has been observed that pediatric ulcerative colitis (UC) patients have more extensive disease, are more often treated with systemic steroids and azathioprine, have a higher frequency of steroid dependency, and a more severe disease course compared to adult UC patients.¹ Apart from the only available histo-pathologic study on adult UC patients in Western Saudi Arabia,² no studies considering the whole demographic, clinical, laboratory, therapeutic, and prognostic spectra of adult UC are yet present to be compared with Saadah's study³ in order to verify that observation.

Mahmood D. Al-Mendalawi
 Department of Pediatrics
 Al-Kindy College of Medicine
 Baghdad University
 Baghdad, Iraq

Reply from the Author

Thank you for the interest in my article.³ My comments are as follows:

I agree with Dr. Al-Mendalawi that children with UC tended to have more extensive disease than adults.⁴ Furthermore, when presenting with proctitis, they have a higher chance of proximal colonic spread than adults. The presence of extensive colitis and the long duration

of the disease, especially if the disease started in the pediatric age group are recognized as risk factors for the development of malignancy.⁵ The published pathological study² that was referred to by Dr. Al-Mendalawi may not be a true reflection of the clinical situation in adults with UC in the Western region of Saudi Arabia, and may underestimate the situation, therefore it should be interpreted with caution. Hence, there is a need for a large-scale clinical study, addressing the whole spectrum of the clinical behavior of the disease in adults with UC living in the Western region of Saudi Arabia.

Omar I. Saadah
 Department of Pediatrics and Pediatrics Gastroenterology
 Faculty of Medicine
 King Abdulaziz University
 Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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