The Association between Osteoarthritis of the Knee Joint and Chronic Venous Insufficiency of the Legs

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Background: The possible association between osteoarthritis of the knee joint and chronic venous insufficiency of the legs needs to be investigated because some risk factors are common to both.

Objective: To evaluate the association between knee osteoarthritis and chronic venous insufficiency of the legs.

Setting: Outpatient clinic, Ibn Sinna Teaching Hospital, Iraq.

Method: Thirty patients with knee osteoarthritis and thirty control cases with no knee symptoms were evaluated clinically for chronic venous insufficiency.

Result: Knee osteoarthritis was significantly associated with leg edema (P value 0.002), varicose veins (P value 0.011) and abnormal leg veins (whether varicose veins alone or spider veins or both), (P values 0.02). The presence of chronic venous insufficiency may contribute to the severity of osteoarthritis.

Conclusion: An association does exist between knee osteoarthritis and chronic venous insufficiency of the legs. Further studies are needed to investigate the association including the possibility of pathogenic contribution.

The etiologic and pathogenic factors of OA are numerous; they include obesity, age, sex, overuse and a low grade pre-inflammatory state. Some of the risk factors for knee OA, such as prolonged standing, age, sex and trauma are also involved in chronic venous insufficiency (CVI) of the legs. Furthermore, CVI is also associated with an inflammatory component originating locally in the lower limb circulation.

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