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Sexual Maturation of Female Adolescent Patients with Sickle Cell Anaemia in Lagos, Nigeria

Maturation sexuelle des adolescentes atteintes de l'anémie falciforme à Lagos, Nigéria

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Sickle cell anaemia (SCA) has been shown to have adverse effects on growth and sexual development. Recent Nigerian studies have reported a declining trend in the age of sexual maturation and menarche in haemoglobin AA (HbAA) individuals.

OBJECTIVE: To evaluate the sexual maturation of female patients with SCA aged 10 to 19 years seen at Lagos University Teaching Hospital Idi-Araba, Lagos and Sickle Cell Foundation.

METHODS: It was a cross-sectional study involving 140 girls with SCA (subjects) and an equal number of girls with HbAA (controls) who were matched for age and socio-economic class over a five-month period. The evaluation involved anthropometry, calculation of BMI and determination of breast and pubic hair development using Tanner staging.

RESULTS: The mean BMI for the subjects was $17.2 \pm 2.39 \text{ kg/m}^2$ and $20.2 \pm 3.09 \text{ kg/m}^2$ for the controls ($p < 0.001$). The mean age at onset of breast development (B2) was 13 ± 0.39 years in the subjects and 10.5 ± 0.51 years in the controls ($p < 0.001$). The corresponding mean age for pubic hair development (PH2) was also higher at 13.8 ± 0.59 years for the girls with SCA and 10.4 ± 0.51 years for the controls ($p < 0.001$), while menarche was achieved in the subjects at 14.7 ± 1.68 years and in the controls at 12.3 ± 1.33 years ($p < 0.001$). Upper socioeconomic class was associated with earlier menarche and faster transition from pre-pubertal stage to pubertal stage of sexual maturation in the controls but was not observed in the SCA subjects.

CONCLUSION: Sexual maturity in patients with SCA lagged behind those of the HbAA controls.

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KEYWORDS: Haemoglobin SS, Sexual maturity, Menarc

RÉSUMÉ

CONTEXTE: Il a été démontré que la drépanocytose (ACS) a un effet néfaste sur la croissance et le développement sexuel. Des études nigériennes récentes ont rapporté une tendance à la baisse de l'âge de maturation sexuelle et de la ménarche chez les individus hémoglobine AA (HbAA).

OBJECTIF: Évaluer la maturation sexuelle de patientes atteintes d'ACS âgées de 10 à 19 ans vues à l'hôpital universitaire de Lagos Idi-Araba, Lagos et à la Fondation drépanocytaire.

MÉTHODOLOGIE: Il s'agissait d'une étude transversale portant sur 140 filles atteintes d'ACS (sujets) et un nombre égal de filles atteintes d'AAb (témoins) qui ont été appariées pour l'âge et la classe socio-économique sur une période de cinq mois. L'évaluation comprenait des mesures anthropométriques, le calcul de l'IMC et la détermination du développement des poils mammaires et pubiens à l'aide de la stadiation Tanner.

RÉSULTATS: L'IMC moyen pour les sujets était de $17,2 \pm 2,39 \text{ kg/m}^2$ et de $20,2 \pm 3,09 \text{ kg/m}^2$ pour les témoins ($p < 0,001$). L'âge moyen au début du développement mammaire (B2) était de $13 \pm 0,39$ ans chez les sujets et de $10,5 \pm 0,51$ ans chez les témoins ($p < 0,001$). L'âge moyen correspondant pour le développement des poils pubiens (PH2) était également plus élevé à $13,8 \pm 0,59$ ans pour les filles atteintes d'ACS et à $10,4 \pm 0,51$ ans pour les témoins ($p < 0,001$) tandis que la ménarche a été atteinte chez les sujets à $14,7 \pm 1,68$ ans et chez les témoins à $12,3 \pm 1,33$ ans ($p < 0,001$). La classe socio-économique supérieure a été associée à une ménarche plus précoce et à une transition plus rapide du stade prépubertaire au stade pubertaire de maturation sexuelle chez les témoins, mais n'a pas été observée chez les sujets SCA.

CONCLUSION: La maturité sexuelle chez les patients atteints d'ACS était inférieure à celle des témoins de l'HbAA.

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MOTS CLÉS: Hémoglobine SS, Maturité sexuelle, Ménarche

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Abbreviation;

SCA: Sickle cell anaemia; **HbSS:** Haemoglobin genotype SS; **HbAA:** Haemoglobin genotype AA; **LUTH:** Lagos University Teaching Hospital; **SCF:** Sickle Cell Foundation; **SEC:** Socio-economic class; **BMI:** Body mass index; **B1-B5:** Tanner stages of Breast one to five; **PH1-PH5:** Tanner stages of Pubic Hair one to five; **ANOVA:** Analysis of variance; **PCV:** Packed cell volume