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VIROLOGIA

STUDY ON CERVICAL HPV-INFECTION IN WOMEN AFFECTED OR NOT BY BACTERIAL VAGINOSIS AND OTHER SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

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INTRODUZIONE

High risk (HR) human papilloma virus (HPV) persistent infection is strongly associated with cervical carcinoma. A healthy vaginal flora aids to calibrate immune response to HPV whereas bacterial vaginosis (BV) could deregulate it, thus contributing to HPV persistence. With respect to the HPV status, the prevalence of BV-associated bacteria and of other sexually transmitted infections (STI) was not extensively studied. The aim of this study is to characterize patients' cervical HPV infections in relation to the oncogenic risk of the HPV genotypes, the presence of BV-related bacteria, Lactobacillus spp., Candida spp. and coinfections with STI.

METODI

About 100 Italian women, 16-40 years old, were enrolled during their first visit to a gynecological clinic of Policlinico Umberto I University Hospital, if they were not previously diagnosed with HPV infections or HPV-related lesions. Cervical samples were tested for HPV DNA by PCR and sequencing of the L1 viral gene, for BV, STI and Candidiasis using Multiplex Real Time PCR (AllplexTM STI/BV Panel Assay, Seegene, Korea).

RISULTATI

HPV DNA was detected in 48/105 (46%) of the women; 29/48 (60%) were positive to high-risk genotypes. Overall, BV rates were high and did not differ significantly between HPV-positive and HPV-negative women; however, a tendency to present more than one bacterial species associated to BV (p=0.185) was noted in the HPV-positive women. U. Urealyticum (p=0.046) was significantly more frequent in the HPV-positive women than in the negative; the other STI tested (U. parvum M. Genitalium, M. Hominis, T. Vaginalis, C. trachomatis, N. Gonorrhoeae) were not common and did not differ among groups. Interestingly, however, the presence of at least one STI was significantly more frequent in the HPV-positive women (p=0.031) than in the HPV-negative.

CONCLUSIONI

Collectively, we found that young HPV-positive women frequently present another STI that may deserve to be tested with molecular syndromic panels. Enrolled women will be tested in follow-up visits in order to assess whether HPV clearance is influenced by the presence of a specific coinfecting microbe.