

Abstract

Objective: Fatigue is one of the most common complaints and is a potentially modifiable issue in systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE). Studies suggest that alcohol consumption has a protective effect against the development of SLE; however, an association between alcohol consumption and fatigue in patients with SLE has not been studied. Here we assessed whether alcohol consumption was associated with fatigue using lupus patient-reported outcomes (LupusPRO).

Methods: This cross-sectional study, conducted between 2018 and 2019, included 534 patients (median age, 45 years; 87.3% female) from 10 institutions in Japan. The main exposure was alcohol consumption, which was defined as the frequency of drinking [<1 day/month (none group), ≤ 1 day/week (moderate group), and ≥ 2 days/week (frequent group)]. The outcome measure was the Pain Vitality domain score in LupusPRO.

Multiple regression analysis was performed as the primary analysis after adjusting for confounding factors, such as age, sex, and damage. Subsequently, the same analysis was performed as a sensitivity analysis after multiple imputations (MIs) for missing data ($n=580$).

Results: In total, 326 (61.0%) patients were categorized into the none group, 121 (22.7%) into the moderate group, and 87 (16.3%) into the frequent group. The frequent group was independently associated with less fatigue compared with none group [$\beta = 5.98$ (95% CI 0.19 to 11.76), $P = 0.04$], and the results did not substantially deviate after MI.

Conclusions: Frequent drinking was associated with less fatigue, which highlights the need for further longitudinal studies focusing on drinking habits in patients with SLE.