



SERUM GAMMA GLUTAMYL TRANSFERASE AND SIALIC ACID LEVELS IN TYPE 2 DIABETIC PATIENTS AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH GLYCEMIC CONTROL

Kishan Prasad HL*¹, Sabari Das.¹, Suchetha Kumari² and Jayaprakash Shetty K*¹

¹Department of Pathology, K S Hegde Medical Academy, Mangalore

²Department of Biochemistry, K S Hegde Medical Academy, Mangalore

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To analyse the association of oxidative stress (GGT activity) and inflammatory response (Sialic acid levels) with glyceemic control (HbA1C) in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus.

Methods: This non-Interventional, cross-sectional study comprised of 60 study subjects with 30 type 2 diabetes patients (the case group) and 30 healthy individuals (control group). From the venous blood, serum GGT was measured spectrophotometrically using commercially available kits. Total sialic acid was measured by using diphenylamine method and glycated haemoglobin (HbA1C) was measured using ion-exchange resin method on a spectrophotometer.

Results: The results showed a significant increase in the MDA levels in the elderly population ($1.851 \pm 0.583 \mu\text{M/L}$) in comparison with the young adult population ($0.963 \pm 0.302 \mu\text{M/L}$). There was also a significant reduction in the TAC the elderly, individuals ($1.189 \pm 0.411 \mu\text{M/L}$) as compared to younger adults ($1.342 \pm 0.575 \mu\text{M/L}$; $p < 0.001$). But we did not find any significant correlation between the TAC and MDA levels in the study population.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the present study suggests that serum GGT and Sialic acid concentration is significantly increased in type 2 diabetes mellitus as compared to healthy control. There is a significant positive correlation between GGT and HbA1C. All these findings suggest a link between oxidative stress, inflammation and glyceemic control in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus.

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INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus (DM) refers to a group of metabolic disorders that share the common phenotype of hyperglycaemia^[1]. At 2014, the global prevalence of diabetes was estimated to be 9% among adults aged 18 years and above^[2]. According to WHO, diabetes will be the 7th leading cause of death in 2030^[3]. Recent research studies suggest the association of oxidative stress and inflammation to β -cell dysfunction in the pathogenesis of DM^[4].

Type 2 diabetes (formerly called non-insulin dependent or adult onset) results from the body's ineffective use of insulin. Type 2 diabetes mellitus comprises 90% of people with diabetes around the world^[5] and is largely the result of excess body weight and physical inactivity. Symptoms are similar to those with type 1 diabetes like excessive excretion of urine (polyuria), thirst (polydipsia), constant hunger, weight loss, vision changes and fatigue, but are often less marked. As a result, the disease may be diagnosed several years after onset, once complications have already risen.

*Corresponding author: **Kishan Prasad HL**

Department of Pathology, K S Hegde Medical Academy, Mangalore

Until recently, this type of diabetes was seen only in adults but now it is also occurring in children. Gamma glutamyl transferase (GGT) is a plasma membrane bound enzyme which plays a pivotal role in maintaining the intracellular antioxidant defences through its mediation of extracellular glutathione (GSH) transport into most of the cells^[6]. GGT can reflect the metabolic alterations and can serve as a marker of insulin resistance syndrome. Studies also suggest that GGT plays an important role in antioxidant systems^[6,7].

Sialic acid is an acetylated derivative of neuraminic acid and is attached to the non-reducing residues of carbohydrate chains of glycoproteins and glycolipids^[8]. Sialic acid can be used as a measurement of acute phase response^[9,10]. Several population-based studies round the globe have clearly demonstrated the potential role of elevated serum Sialic acid as an inflammatory biomarker for cardiovascular disease in type 2 DM^[11].

As the development of complications in DM is linked to the accumulation of glycation adducts in tissue proteins, it is the need of the hour to constantly monitor the glyceemic control. Evaluation of plasma glucose measurements (fasting and post prandial blood sugar) provides a picture of short term glyceemic control, whereas the glycated haemoglobin (HbA_{1c}) levels

reflect the average glycaemic control over the previous 3 months^[1].

The rationale behind our study is to analyze the association of oxidative stress (GGT activity) and inflammatory response (Sialic acid levels) with glycemic control (HbA_{1c}) in patients with Type 2 DM.

Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this study is

- To estimate the Fasting blood sugar (FBS) level and glycated hemoglobin (HbA_{1c}) in Type 2 diabetes mellitus patients (the case group) and in the control group.
- To evaluate the serum GGT and Sialic acid levels in the case and control groups.
- To compare the serum GGT activity and Sialic acid levels with Glycated hemoglobin (HbA_{1c}) in the study population.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

Type of Study : Prospective case-control study
 Study duration : 2 months
 Sample size : Minimum of 60subjects (30 case + 30 controls)

Ethical considerations

Institutional Ethical Clearance was obtained. A total of 60 study participants of both the sexes fulfilling the inclusion criteria was recruited.

Study population

The study population comprised of

- **Case group** : 30 cases of type 2 DM patients of either sex
- **Control group** : 30 non-diabetic individuals of either sex.

Inclusion criteria

30 cases of type 2 DM confirmed by biochemical investigations as per WHO criteria. The following table summarizes the 2006 WHO recommendations for the diagnostic criteria of diabetes (Table 1)

Table 1 2006 WHO recommendations for the diagnostic criteria of diabetes

	Fasting Blood Glucose (FBS) levels (mg/dl)	2 hour glucose (mg/dl)
Normal	<110	<140
DM	≥126	≥200

Exclusion criteria

- Patients with type 1 DM, acute complications such as severe infections.
- History of previous surgery, severe cardiovascular or respiratory distress.
- Smokers, alcoholics and patients under any nutritional supplements etc.

Sample Collection

5ml of blood sample was collected after an overnight fasting from the recruited subjects. Serum separated and was stored at -20°C until analysis.

Procedure

1. Fasting plasma glucose was measured by glucose-oxidase method.
2. Glycated hemoglobin (HbA_{1c}) was measured using ion-exchange resin method on Spectrophotometer.
3. GGT was measured spectrophotometrically using commercially available kits.
4. Total serum sialic acid was measured by using diphenylamine method^[27].

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation of the collected data was computed along with confidence intervals. Comparison of the different parameters under study in the different groups was tested by using the chi-square test. ‘p’ value of <0.05 was considered significant. SPSS software was used for the analysis of the data.

OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS

The study involves the estimation of gamma-glutamyl transferase (GGT) and Sialic acid levels in diabetic as well as healthy individuals and its correlation with glycated haemoglobin (HbA_{1c}). In our study, we found out that there is a significant increase in GGT levels in diabetic individuals (26.8 ± 2.19) as compared to the control population (21.6 ± 0.873).

Table 2 GGT concentration (U/L) in diabetic population and control

Study group	GGT in U/L	
	Mean	Standard Deviation
Type 2 diabetic patients	26.8	2.19
Control	21.6	0.873

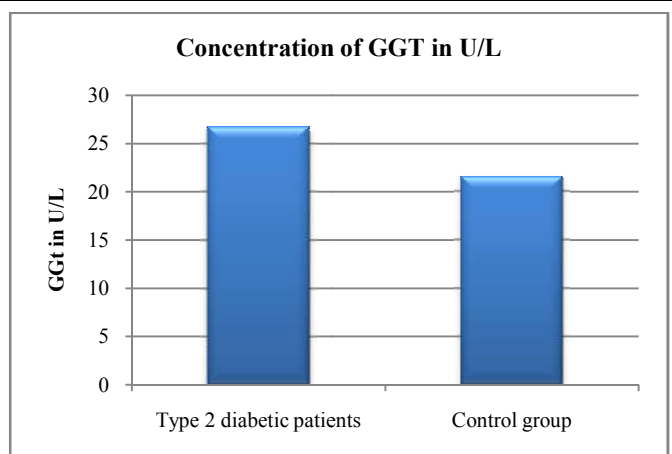


Figure 1 Concentration of GGT in type 2 diabetic patients and control group.

The study also showed an increase in Sialic acid level in type 2 diabetic patients (82.90 ± 1.542) in comparison with normal healthy individuals (58.43 ± 1.135).

Table 2 Sialic acid (mg/dL) levels in diabetic patients and control.

Study group	Sialic acid in mg/dL	
	Mean	Standard Deviation
Type 2 diabetic patients	82.90	1.542
Control	58.43	1.135

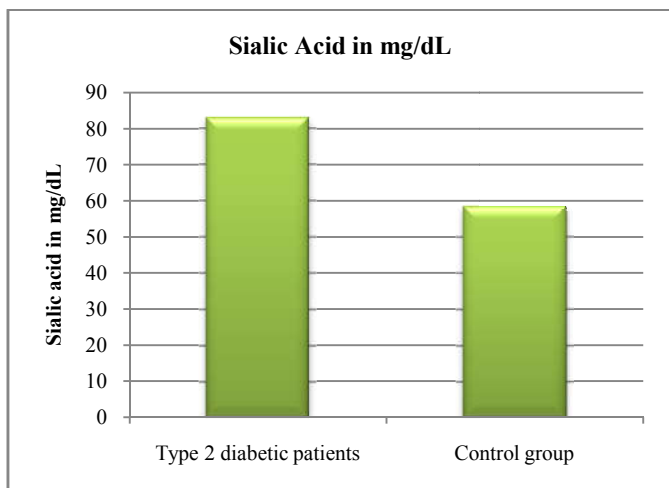


Figure 2 Sialic acid (mg/dL) levels in type 2 diabetic patients and control

Table 2 Showing mean and standard deviation of various parameters studied.

Parameter	Control (mean±SEM)	Diabetes(mean±SEM)	p- Value	Significance
FBS in mg/L	98.2 ± 2.18	146 ± 5.74	P<0.0001	Yes
HbA1C %	3.91 ± 0.125	6.94 ± 0.31	P<0.0001	Yes
GGT in U/L	21.6 ± 0.873	26.8 ± 2.19	P<0.05	Yes
Sialic Acid in mg/dL	58.43 ± 1.135	82.90 ± 1.542	P<0.0001	Yes

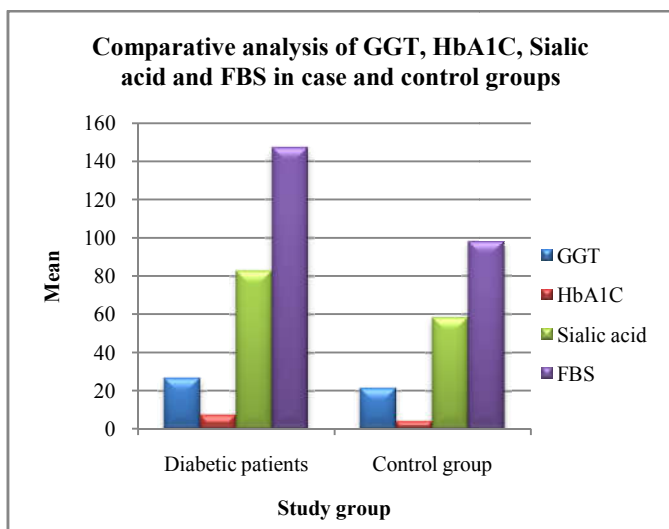


Figure 1 Comparative analysis of GGT, HbA₁C, Sialic acid and FBS in case and control groups.

We could also find a significant positive correlation between GGT and HbA₁C in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus.

Table 3 Pearson's correlation analysis between serum GGT with HbA₁C

	Correlation coefficient r value	Two tailed p value
Serum GGT with HbA ₁ C	0.452	<0.05

DISCUSSION

The exact cause of type 2 diabetes mellitus which affects at least 100 million people throughout the world is not known. Though insulin resistance seems to be the central abnormality, the origin of the impaired insulin action and how it explains the complications of diabetes mellitus is not known.

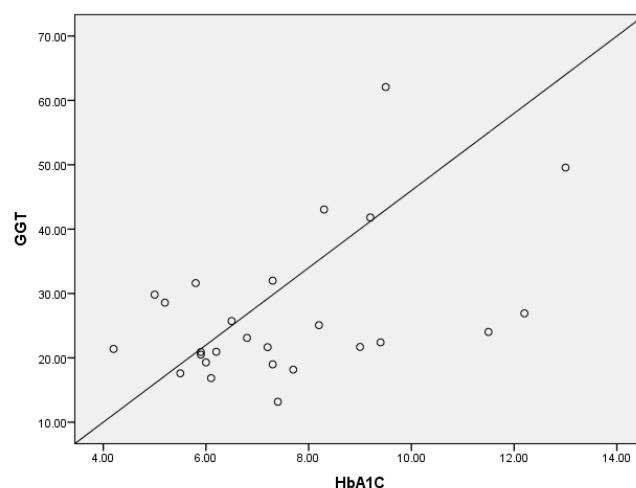


Figure 2 Showing correlation between serum GGT with HbA₁C in type 2 diabetic patients.

Our study showed statistically significantly increased concentration of GGT and Sialic acid in serum in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus as compared to normal healthy individuals. Also, we found a significant positive correlation between GGT and HbA₁C in type diabetic patients. These findings suggest a link between oxidative stress (as indicated by serum GGT concentration) and inflammation (Sialic acid) with glycemic control (HbA₁C). This could suggest the probable role of oxidative stress and chronic low grade inflammation in the pathogenesis of type 2 diabetes mellitus.

Elevation of serum GGT could be the expression of an excess fat deposition in the liver, termed non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. Fatty liver is thought to cause hepatic insulin resistance and to contribute to the development of systemic insulin resistance and hyperinsulinemia. Thus, GGT could serve as a marker of insulin resistance in the pathogenesis of diabetes. [28,29]

There is also strong supportive evidence to suggest that GGT is not only a marker of insulin resistance but also a marker of oxidative stress. Various studies have reported that GGT has a central role in the maintenance of intracellular antioxidant defences through its mediation of extracellular glutathione transport into most types of cells [6]. It is an ectoenzyme normally present at the outer side of the cell membrane that has the primary function of maintaining intracellular concentrations of glutathione (GSH), a critical antioxidant defence for the cell. Increase in GGT activity can be a response to oxidative stress, facilitating increased transport of GSH precursors into cells. In addition, GGT is leaked into the serum possibly because of normal cell turnover and cellular stresses. Several mechanisms for GGT leakage are possible and include increase in oxidative stress, proteolysis, glycosylation, GGT synthesis and endothelial cell damage [30]. Thus, increased serum concentrations of GGT could serve as a marker of increased oxidative and other cellular stresses. Oxidative stress is currently suggested as a patho-mechanism underlying diabetes and its complications. Of late, much attention has been focused on the role of oxidative stress and it has been reported that oxidative stress may constitute the key and common event in the pathogenesis of secondary diabetic complications. Implications of oxidative stress in the pathogenesis of diabetes is suggested, not only by oxygen free-radical generation, but also due to non-enzymatic protein glycosylation, auto-oxidation of glucose, impaired glutathione

metabolism, alteration in antioxidant enzymes, lipid peroxides formation and decreased ascorbic acid levels. In addition to GSH, there are other defence mechanisms against free radicals like enzymes superoxide dismutase (SOD), glutathione peroxidase (GPx) and catalase (CAT) whose activities contribute to eliminate superoxide, hydrogen peroxide and hydroxyl radicals^[31]. Raised GGT concentrations could be a marker of oxidative stress, which might also play, a role in the cause and development of diabetes and its complications^[6,7]. We also observed a statistically significant increase in total sialic acid concentration in the type DM patients studied as compared to controls. As the increased serum sialic acid concentration is due to an increase in acute phase reaction proteins, we confirm the increased acute phase reactant protein response in diabetics. This is in consistent with earlier reports^[32, 33,34] showing increased acute phase response in type 2 diabetics even in the absence of complications which might themselves evoke that response.

Type 2 diabetes is an acute phase disease in which increased concentrations of cytokines are secreted from many cells such as macrophages, adipose tissue and endothelium, under the influence of stimuli such as over nutrition, perhaps in those predisposing to having an unregulated response because of increasing age, genetic, foetal metabolic pre-programming. Cytokines mainly IL-1, IL-6, and TNF α act on the liver to produce the characteristic dyslipidaemia of type 2 diabetes. They also promote the release from the liver of acute phase proteins which are atherosclerotic risk factors, stimulate leptin release from adipose tissue and act on the brain to release ACTH and then cortisol. The latter may contribute to obesity, hypertension and insulin resistance. TNF α also is a major factor in causing insulin resistance, long term hyper secretion of cytokines may impair beta cell insulin secretion^[35].

Our study also suggests a positive correlation between GGT concentration and HbA_{1c} levels in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus. There are several lines of evidence to support a relationship between elevated serum GGT and poor glycaemic control. Higher GGT levels are accompanied by more insulin resistance and greater risk for developing type diabetes mellitus and poor glycaemic control^[36-40]. The strong association of serum GGT activity with some diabetes related metabolic disorders, such as atherogenic dyslipidaemia and poor glycaemic control, may be explained by underlying, not mutually exclusive, biological mechanisms such as fatty liver, insulin resistance and enhanced oxidative stress^[36, 41-45]. It is possible that that the occurrence of GGT-mediated redox reactions plays a direct role in the pathogenesis of atherogenic dyslipidaemia and poor glycaemic control, independently of the presence of fatty liver, possibly through the induction of chronic inflammation and insulin resistance^[46].

It is true that relatively small sample size is considered as a potential limitation of the present study and further intensive evaluation is need encompassing larger sample size considering other parameters of oxidative stress, dietary habit, genetic predisposition, fasting insulin concentration and lifestyle of the study population

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the present study suggests that serum GGT and Sialic acid concentration is significantly increased in type 2 diabetes mellitus as compared to healthy control. There is a

significant positive correlation between GGT and HbA_{1c}. All these findings suggest a link between oxidative stress, inflammation and glycaemic control in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus. Thus, we propose that insulin resistance due to increase in GGT and persistent low grade inflammation as suggested by elevated Sialic acid levels has a significant role in the genesis of type 2 diabetes mellitus. Further, GGT and its correlation with glycated haemoglobin (HbA_{1c}) could highlight the probable clinical use of GGT evaluation in future as a marker of diabetic complications.

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