ASSOCIATION OF SERUM MAGNESIUM LEVELS WITH HOMEOSTATIC MODEL ASSESSMENT OF INSULIN RESISTANCE IN PATIENTS WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS ON METFORMIN OR PIOGLITAZONE

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of this study is to analyze the association between serum magnesium (Mg) level with insulin resistance in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus (DM) who had taken metformin or pioglitazone. In a hypomagnesemic state, there is a decrease in the phosphorylation of insulin receptor which leads to an increase in insulin resistance.

Methods: The inclusion criteria were patients of type 2 DM who had already used metformin or pioglitazone with a body mass index of <30 kg/m². An examination of Mg nutrient intake on the patients was carried out with a validated food frequency questionnaire of nutrient intake for the past 3 days by a nutritionist. Fasting plasma glucose was analyzed using *Roche/Hitachi Cobas C System*. Fasting insulin was analyzed using the *Elecsys and Cobas E Immunoassay Analyzers.* Serum Mg level was analyzed using *Roche/Hitachi Cobas C 311/501 System.*

Results: The study involved 41 subjects of patients with type 2 DM. The mean of Mg nutrient intake was still low with an average of 207.2±90.5 mg/d. The mean value of serum Mg levels was 0.83±0.07 mmol/l. The mean of homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance (HOMA-IR) was 4.82±5.66. The lower level of the serum Mg had a significant correlation with HOMA-IR.

Conclusion: The nutrient intake containing Mg is lower than the recommendation. There is a significant negative correlation between the Mg level and HOMA-IR on type 2 DM on metformin or pioglitazone.

Keywords: Serum magnesium levels, Insulin resistance, Homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance, Type 2 diabetes mellitus.

INTRODUCTION

Death due to type 2 diabetes mellitus (DM) increased in line with a number of patients with type 2 DM. The data indicate that every 10 s, there is a death of a person due to the complications of type 2 DM worldwide [1]. One of the causes of increasing complication in type 2 DM is hypomagnesemia [2,3]. Hypomagnesemia is known to be associated with an increase in insulin resistance in type 2 DM resulting in the accelerated progression of the disease causing the risk of complications in type 2 DM [4,5].

The prevalence of hypomagnesemia in patients with type 2 DM varies between 13.5 and 47.7% [4]. In Indonesia, there have been no data on the prevalence or incidence of hypomagnesemia in type 2 DM. Hypomagnesemia has its contribution to the worsening of glycemic control, and if it is not controlled, it can lead to complications of type 2 DM in certain periods of time [6-10]. Additional data related indicate that hypomagnesemia is associated with the incidence of retinopathy, nephropathy, and diabetic feet as the complications of type 2 DM [7,9,10].

Physiologically, magnesium (Mg) has an important role in carbohydrate metabolism. It is as a cofactor of glucose transport mechanism in membrane cells and various enzymatic reactions to carbohydrate oxidation [11]. The existence of hypomagnesemia can affect the insulin sensitivity [3,12]. The role of Mg in the insulin sensitivity is situated on the autophosphorylation of the β-subunit insulin receptor. The crystalline structure of the insulin receptor tyrosine kinase shows the presence of two Mg ions that bind to the domain of tyrosine kinase [12]. In a hypomagnesemic state, there is a decrease in the phosphorylation of the insulin receptor which leads to an increase in insulin resistance.

In this study, the association of serum Mg level and homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance (HOMA-IR) in patients with type 2 DM on metformin or pioglitazone was analyzed. Author's also studied the profile of Mg nutrient intake in patients with type 2 DM. According to the author's knowledge, no comprehensive work was dedicated to analyze this association in patient with type 2 DM on metformin or pioglitazone treatment. It is highly expected that this study can provide some information to prevent the worse condition of patients with type 2 DM since Mg serum level is contributing to the insulin resistance in patients with type 2 DM.

METHODS

This study is an observational analytic study with cross-sectional design conducted at Private Practice of Internists of Metabolic and Diabetes Endocrinology Consultants in Surabaya, Indonesia. The study was approved by the Committee of the Health Research Ethics of the Faculty of Medicine, Airlangga University, Surabaya. The inclusion criteria were patients with type 2 DM, more than 18 years, use of metformin ≥750 mg/d for at least 3 weeks or pioglitazone ≥15 mg/d for at least 4 weeks, and the body mass index (BMI) <30 kg/m². The exclusion criteria included impaired renal function with serum creatinine >106.08 μmol/l for women and >132.6 μmol/l for men, pregnant or lactating women, acute infections or inflammation, gastrointestinal and chronic liver diseases, history of drinking alcohol or smoking, taking proton-pump inhibitors, diuretics, aminoglycoside drugs, amphotericin B, vitamin and mineral supplementation, steroids, and history of getting therapy of cetuximab, erlotinib, cisplatin, carboplatin, cyclosporine, or tacrolimus.

An examination of nutritional intake containing Mg was carried out through validated food frequency questionnaires based on recall and

record of nutrition intake for the past 3 days by nutritionists, and then, the examinations of the fasting plasma glucose, fasting insulin, and serum Mg levels after fasting 10–12 h were done. Fasting plasma glucose was analyzed using *Roche/Hitachi Cobas C System*. Fasting insulin was analyzed using the *Elecsys and Cobas E Immunoassay Analyzers*. Serum Mg level was analyzed using *Roche/Hitachi Cobas C 311/501 System*. HOMA-IR was calculated using the formula [13]:

HOMA-IR = {fasting insulin [mIU/l] × (fasting plasma glucose [mmol/l]/22.5)}

All data were analyzed using SPSS version 20.0 software. Bivariate analysis of correlations among the variables was performed by Pearson test or Rank Spearman test. Multivariate analysis was performed by multiple logistic regression. The results were presented in correlation coefficient (r value), and the significant p<0.05 and confidence interval was 95%.

RESULTS

The study involved 41 subjects of patients with type 2 DM who had met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The characteristics of subjects are shown in Table 1 and Figs. 1 and 2. The mean of serum Mg levels was 0.83±0.07 mmol/l. The mean Mg nutrient intake was 207.2±90.5 mg/d. Unfortunately, not all study subjects were willing to be examined. Six

Fig. 1: Graph of serum magnesium levels. Sample size=41, serum magnesium levels <0.69 mmol/l=4.9%, serum magnesium levels ≥0.69 mmol/l=95.1%

Fig. 2: Graph of serum magnesium levels. Sample size=41, homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance (HOMA-IR) <2.6=34.1%, HOMA-IR ≥2.6=65.9%

of them refused to conduct the nutritional examination. The mean of HOMA-IR was 4.82±5.66.

Bivariate analysis using with Rank Spearman test related to the factors that influence HOMA-IR. Serum Mg levels and using insulin had a significant negative association with HOMA-IR. These data are shown in Table 2. Multivariate analysis was continued using multiple logistic regression with HOMA-IR which was categorized into HOMA-IR <2.6 and HOMA IR ≥2.6. Table 3 indicates the results of multivariate analysis describing that only serum Mg levels were significantly negatively associated with HOMA IR with p=0.024 and odds ratio 0.004 (0.000–0.489). The equation for multiple logistic regression is y = −5.55x + 12.113. Fig. 3 shows a graph of correlation of serum Mg level and HOMA-IR.

Table 1: Characteristics of the study participants

Characteristics	n=41
Female, n (%)	30 (73.2%)
Age (years), mean±SD	60.3±11.5
Duration of type 2 diabetes mellitus (years), mean±SD	11.8±10.11
Dyslipidemia, n (%)	25 (65.9)
Use of statin, n (%)	27 (65.9)
Use of antihypertensive, n (%)	5 (12.2)
Use of insulin, n (%)	13 (31.7)
BMI (kg/m^2), mean±SD	25.4±2.8
Fasting plasma glucose (mmol/l), mean±SD	7.31±2.27
Postprandial plasma glucose (mmol/l), mean±SD	10.26±4.35
HbA1c (%), mean±SD	7.44±1.57
Fasting insulin (mIU/l), mean±SD	14.04±11.71
HOMA IR, mean±SD	4.82±5.66
Total cholesterol (mmol/l), mean±SD	4.33±0.98
Triglyceride (mmol/l), mean±SD	1.44±0.59
LDL (mmol/l), mean±SD	2.48±0.88
HDL (mmol/l), mean±SD	1.23±0.39
Serum creatinine (μmol/l), mean±SD	69.83±15.91
eGFR (ml/min), mean±SD	86.8±17.62
Serum magnesium (mmol/l), mean±SD	0.83±0.07
Magnesium intake (mg/d), mean±SD	207.2±90.5

Sample size=41, BMI: Body mass index, eGFR: Estimated glomerular filtration rate, HbA1c: Glycated hemoglobin, HDL: High-density lipoprotein, HOMA-IR: Homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance, LDL: Low-density lipoprotein, SD: Standard deviation
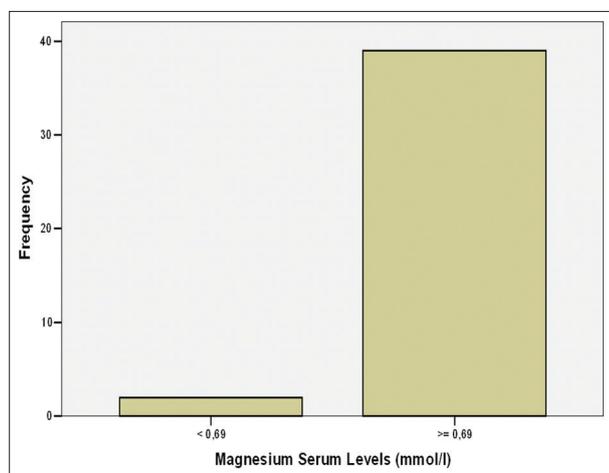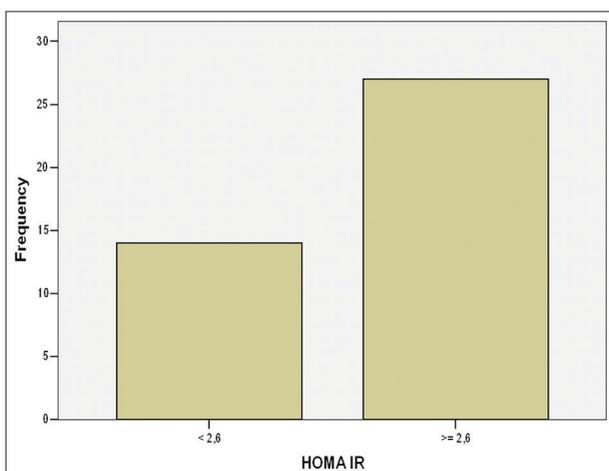
Table 2: Bivariate analysis of factors influencing HOMA-IR

Independent variable	r value	p-value
Age of patient	0.222	0.162
BMI	0.136	0.398
Dyslipidemia	−0.146	0.363
Serum magnesium	−0.375	0.016
Use of statin	−0.146	0.363
Use of antihypertensive	−0.085	0.597
Use of insulin	0.346	0.027

Sample size=41, BMI: Body mass index, r: Correlation coefficient, HOMA-IR: Homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance

Table 3: Multivariate analysis of factors influencing HOMA-IR

Factor	p-value	OR	95% CI	
			Min	Max
Use of insulin	0.206	0.321	0.055	1.867
Serum magnesium	0.024	0.004	0.000	0.489
Dependent variable	HOMA IR			

Sample size=41, CI: Confidence interval, HOMA-IR: Homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance, Min: Minimal, Max: Maximal, OR: Odds ratio
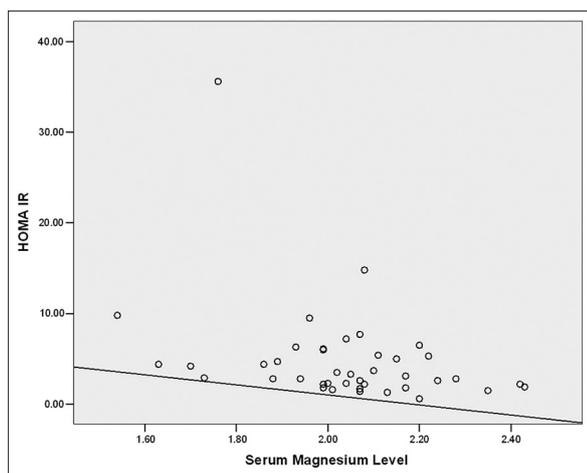
Fig. 3: Graph of the correlation of serum magnesium levels with homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance. Sample size =41, correlation coefficient –0.375

DISCUSSION

Characteristics of subjects were dominated by women. It is different from previous studies in India of Chutia and Lynrah (2015) and Gupta *et al.* (2014), in which men were dominant. This study is in line with the data in Indonesia taken from Indonesian Ministry of Health 2014, indicating that diabetics were indeed dominated by women [8,14,15]. This difference in results can be due to different characteristics between India and Indonesia. The most dominant age group was 46–60 years (46.3%). A different thing was shown by Gupta *et al.* (2014) in India, in which the age group of 34–45 years was dominated [8]. The study is in line with the report of Indonesian Ministry of Health 2014 showing the dominance of the 45–64 years age group [15]. Similar data were shown by Nguyen *et al.* (2012) in 144 type 2 DM patients in New Orleans showed the incidence of type 2 DM increased with age in both different races and genders [16]. These data support the result of this study that the incidence of type 2 DM increased with age. The mean of BMI in this study was 25.4±2.8 kg/m². It has been noticed that obesity itself is a confounding factor for insulin resistance [17]. Arafat *et al.* (2014) indicated that there was a significant difference between the presence of type 2 DM in obese subjects compares to non-obese one regardless age, race, and gender [18]. It was the underlying reason why obesity in this study was excluded. The mean of Mg nutrient intake in this study was 207.2±90.5 mg/d. It was much lower than recommended one [19].Some different things were shown in the study of 97 patients with type 2 DM and 100 healthy non-diabetic subjects in Switzerland. The results indicated that the mean of Mg nutrient intake in diabetic men and men in the control group was 423.2±103.1 mg/d and 421.1±111.0 mg/d, while the mean of Mg nutrient intake in diabetic women and women in the control group was 419.1±109.7 mg/d and 383.5±109.7 mg/d. The results of the study indicated that there was no difference in Mg nutrient intake in diabetics and non-diabetics subjects and the average of intake in both groups in Switzerland was in accordance with the recommendations [20]. Other studies, Schmidt *et al.* (1994) in the United States, used the food records for 3 days in 50 patients with type 2 DM. It showed that the averages of Mg nutrient intake in men were 336.8 mg/d and in women 216.5 mg/d [21]. These different results show that there were some differences in patterns of eating habits related to food containing Mg. Food items that were often consumed in Switzerland were cereal products with 23% of food containing Mg, while in the United States, cereal consumption was estimated at 17–18% of food containing Mg [20, 21]. In this study, there were limitations so food containing Mg which was often consumed cannot be recorded.

The mean of serum Mg levels in this study was 0.83±0.07 mmol/l. The same result was shown by Tarigan *et al.* (2015) in Jakarta that the serum Mg levels <0.69 mmol/l were 13.2% and ≥0.69 mmol/l were 86.8% that dominated with the normomagnesemia group [22]. The different results were shown in the previous studies in India by Gupta *et al.* (2014) and Chutia and Lynrah (2015) that the mean of serum Mg levels was 0.49 mmol/l and 0.60 mmol/l [8,14]. Both studies showed lower serum Mg levels in the subjects than those of this study and Tarigan *et al.* (2015) [22]. This was related to Mg nutrient intake which is different from those in Indonesia. The diet in the previous study, Gupta *et al.* (2014) in western India and Chutia and Lynrah (2015) in northern India, shows that diets tended to be based on fruits, snacks, sweet foods, vegetables, whole grains, wheat, and rice [23]. These food ingredients were containing high glucose. Plummer (2017) states that there has been a change in diet in India over the past 25 years. Consumption of meat and animal products increased, while consumption of grains and wheat decreased. The average consumption of sugar and fatty food also increased. This was the cause of higher glycemic control in India which will eventually lead to lower serum Mg levels than in Indonesia [24].

The mean of HOMA-IR shown in this study was 4.82. Different results were shown by Chutia and Lynrah (2015) in 38 patients with type 2 DM with an average of 4.05 [14]. Similar HOMA-IR mean values were shown in Gupta *et al.* (2014) in 50 patients with type 2 DM with overweight with the mean value of 5.7. The results of this previous study were different from this study because the subjects in Gupta *et al.* (2014) had the mean glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) 8.2% that higher than our study with the mean HbA1c of 7.44% [8]. The same was shown by Chutia and Lynrah (2015) with the mean fasting plasma glucose 10.82 mmol/l that higher than our study with the mean fasting plasma glucose 7.31 mmol/l [14]. If fasting plasma glucose was relatively high, it could be assumed that HbA1c in Chutia and Lynrah (2015) study was also higher than our study [25,26]. This higher characteristic of HbA1c could be causing higher HOMA-IR than our study. The second reason was that in this study, the subjects before being recruited in this study had used metformin or pioglitazone so that the HOMA-IR could be lower. This was because metformin or pioglitazone had a function to reduce insulin resistance [27-29].

In this study, the serum Mg levels had a significant negative relationship to the HOMA-IR with r=0.375 and p=0.024. It is similar to Gupta *et al.* (2014) with r=0.6; p<0.0001 and Chutia and Lynrah (2015) with r=0.518; p<0.001 [8,14]. The lower value of a correlation in the previous study could be caused by several things. First, it could be caused by a different study design. Second, the study subjects of the case group in Gupta *et al.* (2014) were overweight patients who could be the confounding factor that increased the insulin resistance [8]. Third, subjects in this study had already used metformin or pioglitazone. Fourth, there were still some confounding factors in this study that could not be controlled such as diet, physical activities, and dyslipidemia. These are the things that are believed to underlie the differences in the correlation values of the previous studies and this study.

Limitations and weaknesses of this study, there were still some confounding variables that cannot be controlled such as diet, physical activity, and dyslipidemia. Kartono *et al.* (2017) found that increased physical exercise enhanced insulin sensitivity [30]. Second, there was no overall antidiabetic drug equation. Third, in the inclusion criteria, BMI <30 kg/m² which aims to exclude obesity is carried out according to the World Health Organization criteria of 2004 not according to the Asia-Pacific criteria.

CONCLUSION

It can conclude that the intake of nutrients containing Mg is much lower than that of the recommended one. The results indicated that there was a significant negative relationship between serum Mg level and HOMA-IR on type 2 DM on metformin of pioglitazone. It means that the serum Mg level is an important thing to consider in patients with type 2 diabetes.

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