Pepsin in saliva as a diagnostic biomarker in laryngopharyngeal reflux: A meta-analysis

Wang Jing
West China Medical School - Sichuan University, China

Aim: Pepsin in saliva is used as a biomarker contributing to the diagnosis of laryngopharyngeal reflux (LPR), but the results remain controversial. We aim to assess the diagnostic value of Pepsin in saliva for LPR.

Methodology: Pubmed, Emabase and Web of Science were searched for relevant studies published up to March 15th 2017, systematically. Articles that evaluated the utility of pepsin in saliva in the diagnosis of LPR were included. We used Stata 12.0 software to summarize the diagnostic indexes for meta-analysis.

Results: A total of 11 eligible studies met inclusion criteria. After meta-analysis for included studies, the pooled sensitivity and specificity were 64% (95% confidence interval [CI], 43-80%) and 68% (95% CI: 55-78%), respectively; the positive likelihood ratio (PLR) and negative likelihood ratio (NLR) were 2.0 (95% CI: 1.4-2.9) and 0.54 (95% CI: 0.33-0.87), respectively; the diagnostic odds ratio (DOR) was 4 (95% CI: 2-8), and the area under the curve (AUC) was 0.71 (95% CI: 0.67-0.75).

Conclusions: Pepsin in saliva have a moderate value in the diagnosis of LPR. Cutoff value could affect the diagnostic value. Therefore, further investigations are required to find the optimal cutoff value of pepsin.

471751695@qq.com

Journal of Gastrointestinal & Digestive System
ISSN: 2161-069X

Bariatric Surgery 2018 & Gastro 2018
March 15-16, 2018

Volume 8

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