Population-based study of the incidence, histological subtypes, and clinical characteristics of primary gastrointestinal Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma in the Negev, Israel

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Background and Aims: The epidemiology of primary gastrointestinal lymphoma (PGL) in Israel is completely lacking. We aimed to explore the characteristics, clinical features, and risk factors for PGL in the Negev population. Methods: We conducted a population-based study to identify all adult patients with PGL in the Negev between 1998 and 2013. Epidemiologic and clinical data were obtained from electronic medical records and databases of Soroka Medical Center, Clalit Health Services, and the Israeli National Cancer Registry. Results: Overall, 131 patients with PGL were identified (Median age 66, 57% males). Of those 87.8% and 12.2% were of Jewish and Bedouin descent, respectively. The most common anatomical presentation was in the stomach(49.6%), followed by the oral cavity(18.3%), small bowel(12.2%), liver (9.2%), colon (6.9%), and pancreas(3.8%). Histologically, diffuse large B cell lymphoma was the predominant subtype (55.0%), followed by MALToma (25.2%), T-cell (10.7%), Mantle cell (5.3%), and other lymphoma subtypes. Most patients (66.4%) were diagnosed with early stage disease. Gender difference was present only in T-cell lymphoma (78.6% males vs. 21.4% females, p=0.008). Overall, 62 (47.3%) patients died during the study period. Lymphoma involving the liver had a worse prognosis, (33% survival rate at 5 years) compared to upper and lower GI disease (70.5% and 46.8% respectively (p=0.003)). Conclusions: PGL in the Negev population tends to present at an early stage and most commonly in the stomach. Further studies are needed to determine whether PGL is a unique clinical entity in terms of clinical manifestations, therapeutic management and long term prognosis.