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Uninary extracellular matrix proteins as reliable predictors of ureter pelvic junction ob - struction severity in pediatric patients

Francisco Tibor*

Department of Urology, University of São Paulo, School of Medicine, São Paulo, Brazil

✉ ***Francisco Tibor***
Department of Urology,
University of São Paulo, School of Medicine,
São Paulo,
Brazil
E-mail: franciborco@gmail.com

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Description

Ureteropelvic Junction Obstruction (UPJO) is a common congenital anomaly that affects the urinary tract in children. UPJO is caused by a narrowing or blockage of the ureter where it meets the kidney, which can lead to impaired kidney function and other urinary tract problems. UPJO can range from mild to severe, and the severity of the obstruction can have a significant impact on the course of the disease and the effectiveness of treatment.

In recent years, there has been growing interest in the use of urinary Extracellular Matrix (ECM) proteins as predictors of the severity of UPJO in children. The ECM is a complex network of proteins that surrounds and supports cells in tissues throughout the body, and plays a key role in the regulation of cell behavior and tissue function. Changes in the ECM have been associated with a variety of diseases, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, and kidney disease.

Studies have shown that the expression of certain ECM proteins in the urine of children with UPJO can be used to predict the severity of the obstruction and the risk of complications. One such protein is Hyaluronan (HA), a large glycosaminoglycan that is found in the ECM of many tissues, including the kidney. HA has been shown to be increased in the urine of children with severe UPJO, and to be a predictor of the need for surgical intervention. Other ECM proteins that have been studied in the context of UPJO include collagen, fibronectin, and laminin.

The use of urinary ECM proteins as predictors of UPJO severity has several potential advantages over traditional diagnostic methods, such as ultrasound and nuclear medicine imaging. These methods can be expensive, invasive, and expose children to ionizing radiation. Urine collection, on the other hand, is a non-invasive and relatively simple procedure that can be easily performed in a clinical setting. Additionally, urinary ECM proteins may provide a more accurate assessment of the severity of UPJO, as they reflect changes in the ECM that are specific to the affected tissue.

Despite these potential advantages, there are several challenges that must be addressed before urinary ECM proteins can be widely used as predictors of UPJO severity in clinical practice. One major challenge is the need to establish standardized protocols for the collection, processing, and analysis of urine samples. This is necessary to ensure that results are consistent and reliable across different laboratories and clinical settings.

Another challenge is the need to validate the diagnostic accuracy of urinary ECM proteins in large, well-designed clinical studies. While several studies have

shown promising results, there is still a need for more comprehensive studies that include larger patient populations, long-term follow-up, and comparison to other diagnostic methods.

Finally, there is a need to develop practical and cost effective methods for measuring urinary ECM proteins in clinical settings. Currently, many ECM proteins are measured using specialized laboratory techniques that may be too expensive or time-consuming for routine clinical use. New technologies, such as point-of-care diagnostic devices, may be needed to make urinary ECM protein measurements more accessible and practical in clinical practice.

Conclusion

Urinary ECM proteins have the potential to serve as valuable predictors of UPJO severity in children, providing a non-invasive and tissue-specific assessment of the disease. However, there are several challenges that must be addressed before urinary ECM proteins can be widely adopted in clinical practice, including the need for standardized protocols, validation in large clinical studies, and the development of practical measurement methods. With continued research and development, urinary ECM proteins may one day become an important tool in the diagnosis and management of UPJO and other urinary tract disorders in children.