

## POLYMORPHISMS OF THE COMMON THROMBOPHILIC GENES AND THEIR CORRELATIONS WITH RECURRENT PREGNANCY LOSS

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### ABSTRACT

Two or more consecutive pregnancy failures, confirmed by ultrasound or histology, are referred to as recurrent pregnancy loss (RPL). Approximately 2% of pregnant women experience two consecutive miscarriages. The cause of RPL is unclear in up to 50% of individuals. RPL is one of the most complex and challenging situations in reproductive medicine. One recognized risk factor for RPL is polymorphisms of thrombophilic genes. This paper proposes an observational comparison of a group of 50 married women of reproductive age (20–40 years) with a history of two or more pregnancy losses during the first trimester, with a control group of 50 women of the same age who had at least one successful pregnancy without complications. Data were collected through questionnaires and

blood tests for common clotting genes, including factor V Leiden, methylenetetrahydrofolate reductase, plasminogen activator inhibitor-1, beta-fibrinogen, and prothrombin. The results showed that the mean age of the cases ( $32.14 \pm 6.474$  years) was significantly higher than that of the controls ( $29.54 \pm 5.588$  years), and the mean weight of the cases was higher than that of the controls. 46% of the women had two recurrent pregnancy losses, and 44% had three recurrent pregnancy losses, while four or more pregnancy losses were less common. Genetically, heterozygous polymorphisms in the beta-fibrinogen gene were significantly higher in the cases, while homozygous beta-fibrinogen and heterozygous and homozygous methylenetetrahydrofolate reductase were significantly lower. The study also showed a weak

but statistically significant association between recurrent pregnancy loss and factor V Leiden only ( $r = 0.243$ ,  $p = 0.015$ ).

**KEYWORDS:** Polymorphisms, Recurrent Pregnancy Loss, Thrombophilic Genes.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recurrent pregnancy loss (RPL), which affects between 0.5 and 2% of couples, is characterized by two or more consecutive failed clinical pregnancies documented by B-HCG ultrasound and histopathology before the 20<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy, after excluding molar and ectopic pregnancies. This disorder can be brought on by a variety of factors including chromosomal abnormalities, infections, anatomical, hormonal, and immunological abnormalities, and environmental factors.<sup>[1]</sup> In addition to all of these factors, the true causes of approximately half of RPLs are still being considered as idiopathic factors because they have not yet been adequately discovered.<sup>[2,3]</sup>

The RPL is one of the more complicated and difficult situations faced in reproductive medicine and it is upsetting for patients, their families, and medical professionals who are treating them. Patients may experience anxiety and ap The RPL is one of the more complicated and difficult situations faced in reproductive medicine and it is upsetting for patients, their families, and medical professionals who are treating them. Patients may experience anxiety and apprehension when the cause of RPL is unknown.<sup>[4]</sup>

There are two types of RPL: primary and secondary. Pregnancies lost in women who never gave birth to a living child are referred to as primary RPL. On the other hand, pregnancy loss in women who have previously given birth to a living child is known as secondary RPL.<sup>[1]</sup>

## 2. AIM OF THE STUDY

To analyzed the polymorphisms of five common genes in thrombophilia and their correlations with RPL in women of Duhok city.

## 3. Data Collection Tool

The data collected from the answers of patients to the checklist questionnaire during the interview with patients and reviewing their files by researcher, the questionnaire form include data about age, residence, educational levels, occupations, and the economical status. Gravidity, parity, and no. of RPL were assessed. The data was involved past medical history (PMH), past surgical history (PSH), family, social, and psychological history. Weight, height,

and BMI were asked about and determined. Types of supplementations were evaluated.

To assess the relationship between these women's risk of RPL and the polymorphisms in MTHFR C677T, MTHFR A1298C, Prothrombin G20210A, FVL G1691A, and PAI-1 4G/5G, blood samples were obtained and submitted to a lab for genotyping analysis and DNA extraction.

**Table (1): comparison of sociodemographic characteristics between cases and controls.**

Sociodemographic characteristics		Cases Mean $\pm$ SD	Controls Mean $\pm$ SD	p-value*
Age (years)		32.14 $\pm$ 6.474	29.54 $\pm$ 5.588	<b>0.034</b>
Study parameters		Cases (n=50) No. (%)	Controls (n=50) No. (%)	p-value
Residence	Urban	36(72.0)	47(94.0)	<b>0.003*</b>
	Rural	14(28.0)	3(6.0)	
Education	Read and write	4(8.0)	1(2.0)	0.355**
	Primary	10(20.0)	9(18.0)	0.951*
	Secondary	21(42.0)	26(52.0)	0.550*
	Higher (ref.)	15(30.0)	14(28.0)	-----
Occupation	Housewives (ref.)	25(50.0)	11(22.0)	-----
	Government employee	19(38.0)	23(46.0)	<b>0.033*</b>
	Non-government employee	6(12.0)	16(32.0)	<b>0.002*</b>
Economical status	Not enough	9(18.0)	2(4.0)	<b>0.02**</b>
	Enough (ref.)	30(60.0)	45(90.0)	-----
	More than enough	11(22.0)	3(6.0)	<b>0.008*</b>

\*Student t-test for independent two means; \*Chi square test; \*\*Fissure Exact test

The study sample included 100 patients as cases and 100 healthy women as controls. The sociodemographic characteristics were demonstrated in table (3.1). The mean age among the cases (32.14 $\pm$ 6.474 years) was significantly higher than that among the controls (29.54 $\pm$ 5.588 years) at p=0.034. Concerning the residence, 72.0% of the cases and 94.0% of controls were lived in urban in comparison to 28.0% and 6.0% of cases and controls respectively were lived in rural; the difference was statistically significant at p=0.003. No statistically significant differences were found between the each levels of education. The study sample included 100 patients as cases and 100 healthy women as controls.

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No statistically significant differences were found between the each levels of education. Regarding the occupation, both government employee and non-government employee among the cases were significantly lower than those among controls at  $p=0.033$  and  $p=0.002$  respectively.

The economical status was not enough in 18.0% of cases and 4.0% of controls; the difference was statistically significant at  $p=0.02$ , furthermore the more than enough was found in 22.0% of cases and 6.0% of control with statistically significant difference at  $p=0.008$ .

**Table (2): The comparison of anthropometric characteristics between cases and controls.**

Anthropometric characteristics	Cases Mean $\pm$ SD	Controls Mean $\pm$ SD	P-value*
Weight (kg)	76.78 $\pm$ 13.453	71.98 $\pm$ 10.172	0.047
Height (cm)	162.86 $\pm$ 4.865	159.36 $\pm$ 14.041	0.099
BMI(kg/m <sup>2</sup> )	28.92 $\pm$ 4.707	27.63 $\pm$ 3.752	0.132
*Student t-test for independent two means			

The comparison of anthropometric characteristics between cases and controls was demonstrated in table (3.2) and showed that mean weight among the cases was significantly higher than that among controls at  $p=0.047$ . The height and BMI showed no statistically significant difference.

**Table (3): The distribution of obstetric characteristics between cases and controls.**

Obstetric characteristics	Cases Mean±SD	Controls Mean±SD	p-value*
Gravida	4.24±1.672	1.52±0.677	0.000
Para	1.56±1.342	1.52±0.677	0.851
Investigation	Cases No. (%)	Controls No. (%)	p-value**
Yes	11(22.0)	0(0.0)	0.000
No	39(78.0)	50(100.0)	
*t-test for independent two means; **Chi square test			

The comparison of obstetric characteristics between cases and controls was demonstrated in table.(3.3) The mean gravidity among cases was (4.24 $\pm$ 1.672) which was significantly higher

than the mean gravidity among controls ( $1.52 \pm 0.677$ ). The previous gene investigation was conducted among 22.0% of cases but not the controls

**Table (4): The comparison of thrombophilic genes between cases and controls.**

Thrombophilic Genes		Cases No. (%)	Controls No. (%)	P-value
FV Leiden	Heterozygotic	2(4.0)	2(4.0)	1.000**
	Not detected	48(96.0)	48(96.0)	
Plasminogen	Homozygotic	4(8.0)	11(22.0)	0.063*
	Heterozygotic	38(76.0)	34(68.0)	0.560*
	Not detected (ref.)	8(16.0)	5(10.0)	-----
Beta fibrinogen	Heterozygotic	42(84.0)	29(58.0)	<b>0.002*</b>
	Homozygotic	0(0.0)	5(10.0)	<b>0.048**</b>
	No mutation (ref.)	8(16.0)	16(32.0)	-----
MTHFR	Heterozygotic	11(22.0)	29(58.0)	<b>0.000*</b>
	Homozygotic	0(0.0)	16(32.0)	<b>0.000*</b>
	No mutation (ref.)	44(88.0)	3(6.0)	-----
Prothrombine	Heterozygotic	3(6.0)	2(4.0)	0.516*
	No mutation	47(94.0)	48(96.0)	
*Chi square test; **Fissure Exact test				

The comparison of thrombophilic genes between cases and controls was demonstrated in table (3.6) and showed that heterozygotic Beta fibrinogen was found in (84.0%) of cases which was significantly higher ( $p=0.002$ ) than that among the controls (58.0%), the homozygotic Beta fibrinogen was not present among the cases and found in 10.0% among the controls with a statistically significant difference at ( $p=0.048$ ). Heterozygotic MTHFR was found in 22.0% of cases and in 58.0% of controls while the homozygotic MTHFR was found in only the controls (32.0%); the differences of both heterozygotic and homozygotic MTHFR were statistically significant at  $p=0.000$ . FV Leiden, Plasminogen, and Prothrombine showed no statistically significant differences.

**Table (5): The correlations of RPL with studied Thrombophilic Genes.**

Spearman Correlation		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	p-value <sup>c</sup>
RPL	VF Leiden	0.243	0.075	2.475	<b>0.015<sup>c</sup></b>
	PAI	-0.019	0.101	-0.185	0.853 <sup>c</sup>
	Fibrinogen	-0.113	0.084	-1.125	0.263 <sup>c</sup>
	MTHFR	0.081	0.096	0.809	0.421 <sup>c</sup>
	Prothrombine	-0.116	0.085	-1.158	0.250 <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid sample		200			
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.					
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.					
c. Based on normal approximation.					

The correlations of RPL with studied thrombophilic Genes were displayed in table (3.7) and revealed that the RPL was weakly and directly ( $r= 0.243$ ) correlated with VF Leiden in a statistically significant way ( $p=0.015$ ). No significant correlations of RPL were found with PAI, Fibrinogen, MTHFR, and Prothrombine.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The multifactorial condition known as RPL appears to be exacerbated by thrombophilic gene polymorphisms. It was suggested that hereditary thrombophilia is linked to pregnancy loss.<sup>[10]</sup> Analysis of thrombophilia gene polymorphisms might be helpful given the significance of the condition in pregnant women and its link to recurrent pregnancy loss (RPL). FVL is one kind of thrombophilia.<sup>[11]</sup>

The mean age of the patients included in the present study is  $32.14 \pm 6.474$  years which is ranging from 20 to 40 years and among the controls, the mean age is  $29.54 \pm 5.588$  years. The study conducted by Incebiyik *et al.*<sup>[5]</sup> showed a lower mean age among the patients ( $24.69 \pm 2.48$  years with range, 19-34 years). Also, Barut *et al.*,<sup>[12]</sup> study found that the mean age among the patient was  $26.41 \pm 3.517$  years (range 19-37 years).

Regarding the anthropometric characteristics, the present study showed that the cases had heavier weight ( $76.78 \pm 13.453$  kg), taller height ( $162.86 \pm 4.865$  cm), and higher BMI ( $28.92 \pm 4.707$ ). These findings were much higher than the result of the Incebiyik *et al.*,<sup>[5]</sup> study, in which, the mean weight for the patients was ( $64.96 \pm 4.220$  kg), the height was ( $170.82 \pm 1.942$  cm) and BMI  $22.3 \pm 3.01$ . In contrary, Bigdeli *et al.*,<sup>[13]</sup> results in Iran in a case-control study found that the BMI among their patient sample was ( $32.1 \pm 2.9$ ) and ( $31.9 \pm 4.6$ ) among the controls cases.

The gravidity and the parity were assessed in the present study and found that the mean gravidity was  $4.24 \pm 1.672$  which was significantly higher than among the controls while the difference of parity was not significant. Bigdeli *et al.*<sup>[13]</sup> study reported that among cases, gravidity was  $2.59 \pm 1.99$  and parity  $1.05 \pm 1.29$ .

FVL mutation raises the incidence of venous thrombosis and recurrent RPL seven times in heterozygote carriers and eighty times in homozygote carriers, according to a research by Eslami *et al.*<sup>[7]</sup> According to a research by Sarig *et al.*<sup>[14]</sup> women who experienced fetal losses had a 25% incidence of factor V Leiden, compared to 7.6% for controls. According to a



research by Ezz Eldein *et al.*<sup>[6]</sup>, a 39-year-old woman who had previously experienced spontaneous abortions and had given birth to one healthy kid on six separate occasions had the factor V Leiden mutation.

Consequently, pregnancy problems such pregnancy loss and RPL may result from an increase in the hypercoagulable condition.<sup>[15]</sup> Numerous surveys conducted in various countries have indicated wide differences in the heterozygous frequencies of FVL. The Mediterranean nations, including Lebanon (14.4%), Cyprus (12.1%), and Jordan (12.3%), were found to have the greatest prevalence rates. In certain groups, no mutations were found, including

Native Americans, Chinese, Japanese, and Africans.<sup>[16]</sup> A number of studies conducted in various parts of Turkey, a Mediterranean nation, have revealed wide variances in the frequency of FVL. In Turkey, the heterozygous frequency of the FVL mutation was 7.9%. The Thrace area had the lowest frequency (4.28%), whereas the cities of Ankara (9.8%) and Istanbul (10.3%) had the highest prevalence rates in Turkey (15,16). Diyarbakir, which is next to Sanliurfa, has a 4.6% incidence of the FV Leiden mutation.<sup>[7]</sup> Three patients (0.20%) were homozygous for the FVL (G1691T) change, whereas eighty-three patients (5.51%) were heterozygous.<sup>[5]</sup>

Regarding the polymorphism of PAI-1, the present study found that the homozygotic mutation detected in 8.0% of cases compared to 22.0% of controls while the heterozygotic mutation was found in 76.0% of cases and 68.0% of controls. Undetected mutation was reported in 16.0% of cases and 10.0% of controls. Gogu *et al.*,<sup>[8]</sup> According to the study, the case group consisted of 31 patients (31%) with heterozygous polymorphisms of the PAI-1 - 675 4G/5G gene and 9 patients (9%) with its homozygous polymorphism, while the control group were composed of 27 women (27%) with heterozygous and 1 percent with homozygous polymorphisms of the gene.

In the present study, beta fibrinogen gene mutation among the cases was found as heterozygotic in 84.0% and 58.0% among controls while homozygotic mutation of the beta fibrinogen found among 10.0% of the controls only. Kamimoto *et al.*,<sup>[17]</sup> who studied beta-fibrinogen polymorphisms in an Italian population and found that frequencies of G/G, G/A and A/A genotypes of their control population were 62, 35 and 3%, respectively In a cohort of 36 women with pregnancy loss, Li *et al.*,<sup>[24]</sup> identified a surprisingly high number off the patients with reduced fibrinogen levels caused by genetic abnormalities. Al-Astal and Sharif

study<sup>[18]</sup> revealed that  $\beta$ -fibrinogen -455G/A minor allele frequency (allele A) and its homozygous genotype (AA) were not significantly different between the RPL and the control groups.

Heterozygotic of MTHFR mutation in the present study found in 22.0% of cases and 58.0% of the controls while the homozygotic mutation found in 32.0% of the controls. Undetected mutation found in 88.0% of cases and 6.0% of controls. It has been suggested that high levels of homocysteine could be one possible reason for RPL<sup>[19]</sup> In a healthy Turkish population, the rates of heterozygosity and homozygosity for MTHFR (C677T) were found to be 47.4% and 9.6%, respectively. According to a study by Yildiz *et al.*<sup>[20]</sup> the MTHFR C677T gene mutation was less common in RPL patients in Turkey than in the control group (36.9% heterozygous, 3.5% homozygous in PRL patients, whereas 42.6% heterozygous and 2.1% homozygous in the control group). The proportions of homozygous and heterozygous polymorphisms of MTHFR 677C/T were 15% and 42% in the case group and 9% and 25% in the control group, respectively, according to a research by Torabi *et al.*<sup>[16]</sup> In the case group, the rates of heterozygous and homozygous polymorphisms of MTHFR 1298A/C were 27% and 4%, respectively, whereas in the control group, there was no homozygosity and 6% heterozygosity.

The frequency of heterozygous prothrombin gene mutation in the current study showed that the heterozygotic found in 6.0% of cases and 4.0% of control with no significant difference, no homozygous mutation found in this study. Incebiyik *et al.*,<sup>[5]</sup> found that the homozygous mutation of the prothrombin gene (G20210A) was not found, while the frequency of heterozygous mutations was found to be 4.05%. There were 40.61% of patients with heterozygous MTHFR (C677T) and 8.29% of patients with homozygous mutation. 38 out of 86 patients had additional thrombogenic gene variants in addition to FVL: 5 patients had prothrombin G20210A and heterozygous FVL (0.33%) mutations, and 33 patients had MTHFR and heterozygous FVL (2.19%) mutations. Serum prothrombin levels rise as a result of the prothrombin gene mutation, which is caused by a G-to-A change at position 20210 in the 3' untranslated region. RPL, vascular disease, and venous thrombosis may all be made more likely by this rise.<sup>[21]</sup>

In Turkey, 1.2% to 2.7% of individuals had the heterozygous prothrombin G20210A mutation. According to research, 1.7% of people in Sanliurfa, in the southeast region of Anatolia, have the heterozygous prothrombin gene mutation.<sup>[10]</sup> According to the current



study's evaluation of the correlations between RPL and the thrombophilic genes under investigation, VF Leiden and RPL had a poor relationship. There were no discernible relationships between RPL and prothrombin, fibrinogen, MTHFR, or PAI. The first investigation to concurrently examine the frequency and interrelations of the MTHFR 677 C/T, MTHFR 1298A/C, FV Leiden, factor II prothrombin 20210 G/A, ITGB3 1565T/C, and APO B R3500Q polymorphisms in a Caucasian population with a history of RPL was conducted by Hohlagschwandtner et al.<sup>[22]</sup>

They were unable to show any association between the examined polymorphisms and RPL, nor could they show that the interrelations of these polymorphisms had a significant impact on RPL. Sotiriadis et al., 23 assessed the prevalence of five prevalent thrombophilic polymorphisms (FV Leiden, FV 4070 A/G, Factor II prothrombin 20210 G/A, MTHFR 677C/T, and MTHFR 1298 A/C) and their combinations in women who had recurrent miscarriages compared to a control group. Combinations of all or part of the five thrombophilic SNPs were reported. were rare occurrences with varied patterns that did not substantially raise the chance of miscarriage. In addition, Hossain et al.<sup>[15]</sup> discovered that 66% of women who experienced idiopathic pregnancy loss also had thrombophilia. Additionally, they noted that women who experienced pregnancy loss frequently had mixed thrombophilia, and they came to the conclusion that thrombophilia was linked to a higher incidence of late

10 thrombophilic gene polymorphisms in 75 patients with a history of recurrent miscarriage with 14 fertile control women and found no differences between the two groups. However, compared to the controls, individuals who experienced repeated miscarriages had a considerably greater rate of total gene polymorphisms. Additionally, they observed that 68% of women with recurrent miscarriages had thrombophilic gene variants, which were linked to more than three of the ten genes under study.<sup>[9]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Recurrent pregnancy loss is a challenging clinical problem for both patients and obstetricians. There are likely numerous factors that contribute to the tendency for a couple to have pregnancy loss. The present study concluded that there were no significant differences between the patients who had recurrent pregnancy loss and the healthy controls regarding the common thrombophilic genes apart from Beta fibrinogen and Methylenetetrahydrofolate Reductase.

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