Neuropathic sensory symptoms did not accurately detect polyneuropathy in type 2 diabetes mellitus


QUESTION: How accurate are sensory symptoms for predicting polyneuropathy detected by clinical neurological examination in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus?

Diagnosis

Neuropathic sensory symptoms did not accurately detect polyneuropathy in type 2 diabetes mellitus

Funding: No external funding.

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Main results

32% of patients had diabetic polyneuropathy detected by the clinical neurological examination. In univariate regression analyses, neuropathic symptoms associated with the clinical neurological examination were numbness of the feet (β = 0.35, p < 0.001), sensory alteration (β = 0.27, p < 0.001), and symptoms of pain (β = 0.16, p < 0.001). The table shows sensitivities, specificities, and likelihood ratios for daily symptoms of numbness of the feet in patients < 68 and ≥68 years of age.

Conclusion

Neuropathic sensory symptoms did not accurately detect polyneuropathy in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient age</th>
<th>Sensitivity (95% CI)†</th>
<th>Specificity (CI)†</th>
<th>+LR</th>
<th>−LR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;68 y</td>
<td>28% (13 to 44)</td>
<td>93% (87 to 97)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥68 y</td>
<td>22% (9 to 37)</td>
<td>92% (85 to 97)</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

†CIs provided by author.

Abbreviations defined in glossary; LRs calculated from data in article.