

Virtual vs Actual Clinical Assessment Effect on Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Disease during Pandemic of COVID-19

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Introduction:

- The COVID-19 Pandemic has posed numerous obstacles for health and care services around the world.
- It has dramatically altered everything. Since many hospitals have become almost entirely dedicated to COVID-19 patients, access to outpatient clinics has been severely restricted, leading to difficulty in providing correct management and follow-up of chronic disease patients.

Objective:

The aim of this study is to compare between the virtual and traditional methods of SLE assessment and the effect on disease activity amongst adult SLE patients.

Methods:

This study was a case-cross over, of adult patients with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) disease fulfilling the SLICC classification criteria were included from March 2020 to March 2021. The research was implemented at King Khalid University Hospital in Riyadh.

Results:

SLEDAI-2K score was used to determine disease activity and comparing Between Virtual and Actual Clinical Assessment . there were decrease in number of patients with active disease from 64.1% at baseline to 43.5% at 6 months follow-up by virtual assessment to 39.1% at 6-month follow-up by actual clinical assessment along with decrease in mean SLEDAI-2K score from 5.26 at baseline to 3.62 at 6 months follow-up by virtual assessment to 3.38 at 6-month follow-up by actual clinical assessment with statistically difference (p-value <0.0001)

Conclusion:

- Although, the Virtual assessment are widely used during pandemic of COVID-19 to limit the spread of viral infection and reported some effectiveness in assessing SLE activity, still the actual clinical assessment is the best method in assessing SLE activity, complications, and the efficacy of treatment.
- Virtual assessment could lead to over estimation of disease activity which may lead to unnecessary treatment