

The Relationship Between Clinical Activity And Function In Ankylosing Spondylitis Patients

Jane Kawar, MD* Hisham Al-Sayegh, MD*

Objective: To assess the functional status among patients with ankylosing spondylitis (AS), using the Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Functional Index (BASFI) and to find its correlation with clinical measures of spinal mobility, back pain and back morning stiffness.

Methods: Fifty-two patients with AS attending the out patient rheumatology clinics were evaluated by assessing:- functional status; the severity of back pain, back morning stiffness and spinal mobility using clinical measures of spinal flexibility (Shober's maneuver, chest expansion and neck rotation).

Results: Patients with severe back morning stiffness (mean 94.3); impaired lumbar and cervical mobility (mean Shober's 1.6 cms, cervical rotation 82.4deg.) showed significant impairment of functional status (P value <0.05) compared with those having back pain and limited chest expansion (P. value > 0.05).

Conclusion: Poor function is significantly associated with severe back morning stiffness, limited cervical and lumbar mobility, which suggests an important role of these measures in following up AS patients.