

## November 11/05: Autoimmune disorders associated with celiac disease

Celiac disease is the most common hereditary gastroenterological disease. As can be read in the Publication of Month October 10/05, celiac disease has been found to be associated with type I diabetes. The following recent publication describes furthermore an association of celiac disease with other autoimmune diseases:

Slate J, Hookman P, Barkin JS, Phillips RS (2005)

### **Systemic Autoimmune Disorders Associated with Celiac Disease**

*Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 50, 1705 – 1707

This article presents a case report of a 50 years old woman with celiac disease, elevated liver enzyme tests and autoimmune hepatitis. This is the initial report of celiac disease associated with autoimmune hepatitis and HPG. However, it is known that a high percentage of patients with celiac disease show elevated liver transaminase levels. According to various studies, the percentage lies between 39 % and 54 %. About 95 % of these patients were shown to normalize on a gluten-free diet. This has not been reported to autoimmune hepatitis associated with celiac disease.

Based on this finding, the authors discuss the association of celiac disease with other autoimmune diseases. They cite a study that examined the prevalence of autoimmune diseases in celiac disease and found that the autoimmune disease was diagnosed in 114 of 147 cases (77.5 %) before the diagnosis of celiac disease was established. Multiple autoimmune disorders have been associated with celiac disease, including diabetes mellitus, type I dermatitis herpetiformis, connective tissue disease, autoimmune thyroid diseases, alopecia, psoriasis and Addison's disease. This may be explained by the sharing of common HLA class II alleles including B8, DQ2 and, most commonly, DR3. The frequency of celiac disease in patients with autoimmune diseases is unknown.

According to the authors, these results emphasize that patients with autoimmune diseases should also be evaluated for latent celiac disease.

