Contrasting disease patterns in seropositive and seronegative neuromyelitis optica: A multicentre study of 175 patients.

The diagnostic and pathophysiological relevance of antibodies to aquaporin-4 (AQP4-Ab) in patients with neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorders (NMOSD) has been intensively studied. However, little is known so far about the clinical impact of AQP4-Ab seropositivity. To analyse systematically the clinical and paraclinical features associated with NMOSD in Caucasians in a stratified fashion according to the patients' AQP4-Ab serostatus. Retrospective study of 175 Caucasian patients (AQP4-Ab positive in 78.3%). Seropositive patients were found to be predominantly female (p = 0.03) with more frequent 6 vertebral segments as well as entire spinal cord involvement. Myelitis attacks in the first year were identified as possible predictors of a worse outcome. This study provides an overview of the clinical and paraclinical features of NMOSD in Caucasians and demonstrates a
number of distinct disease characteristics in seropositive and seronegative patients.

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