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Summary

GUT MICROBIOME PREDICTS RISK OF AGGRESSIVE DISEASE COURSE IN ULCERATIVE COLITIS: DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF A RISK CLASSIFIER

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A validated microbiome-based classifier using baseline fecal samples identifies treatment-naïve ulcerative colitis patients at risk of aggressive disease course within 12 months, with 50% sensitivity for aggressive disease and 0% false reassurance rate.

KEY POINTS

- In a Norwegian validation cohort of 105 newly diagnosed UC patients, the High-Risk microbiome signature identified 7 of 14 (50%) patients who developed aggressive disease (defined as hospitalization, surgery, repeated corticosteroids, or multiple advanced therapies) within 12 months, with an AUC of 0.85 (95% CI 0.72–0.98) for aggressive versus indolent disease.
- No patient with an aggressive disease course was classified as Low-Risk, yielding a false reassurance rate of 0%, and only 2 of 43 (5%) indolent patients were classified as High-Risk.
- The classifier was developed using the GA-map platform with 44 bacterial DNA probes in a Swedish training cohort (n=167) and validated in an independent Norwegian cohort (n=105), demonstrating that baseline microbiome composition was more strongly associated with 12-month disease course than other clinical variables.
- The remaining 50% of aggressive patients were classified as Moderate-Risk, indicating biological heterogeneity in aggressive disease.
- The study was conducted by employees and shareholders of Genetic Analysis, the company that manufactures the GA-map platform used in the study.

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