

IS THERE A VALUE TO EMA TESTING IN PATIENTS WITH HIGH TITRES OF TTG FOR A NON-BIOPSY DIAGNOSIS OF COELIAC DISEASE?

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A retrospective study of 1,654 positive anti-TTG samples from 2019-2024 found that 100% of cases with anti-TTG greater than 10 times the upper limit of normal had a positive EMA test, questioning the value of routine EMA testing in non-biopsy coeliac disease diagnosis.

KEY POINTS

- All 492 cases with anti-TTG >10xULN demonstrated positive EMA results, regardless of whether the upper limit of normal was set at 70 IU/ml or 100 IU/ml.
- EMA positivity rates increased with higher anti-TTG levels: 99.8% of samples with anti-TTG >50 IU/ml were EMA positive, while only 5% of samples with anti-TTG <10 IU/ml were EMA positive.
- The authors conclude that EMA testing may offer limited additional diagnostic benefit for patients eligible for non-biopsy coeliac disease diagnosis under AGA guidelines, and suggest its use may be better reserved for patients with low-level anti-TTG results.
- The study analysed samples from a West of Ireland laboratory serving over 0.5 million people, with over 90% of tests originating from primary care.

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