Familial Mediterranean Fever in Ashkenazi Jews

MARCEL-FRANCIS KAHN

J Rheumatol 2010;37;2190
http://www.jrheum.org/content/37/10/2190.1

1. Sign up for TOCs and other alerts
   http://www.jrheum.org/alerts

2. Information on Subscriptions
   http://jrheum.com/faq

3. Information on permissions/orders of reprints
   http://jrheum.com/reprints_permissions

*The Journal of Rheumatology* is a monthly international serial edited by Earl D. Silverman featuring research articles on clinical subjects from scientists working in rheumatology and related fields.
Familial Mediterranean Fever in Ashkenazi Jews

To the Editor:

I have some concerns about the recent article devoted to familial Mediterranean fever (FMF) in Ashkenazi Jews¹. I think the study is hampered by a lack of definition to determine who actually is an Ashkenazi Jew (as I am myself). The origin that defines Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews is only a geographic definition, and does not retain any genetic meaning. For example, after 1492, some true Sephardic Jews emigrated to central and oriental Europe.

Conversely, due to events of the 19th and 20th centuries, some Ashkenazi Jews emigrated to North Africa and married there. Such situations did occur frequently in Balkan countries, Bulgaria, and Rumania. If the article was only written to inform the reader that in rare situations, diagnosis of FMF should not be excluded in patients from apparently Ashkenazi origin, one can accept this. But since the authors draw from their data some clinical, therapeutic, and even genetic considerations, one can regret that the problem of definition has been skipped.

MARCEL-FRANCIS KAHN, MD, Department of Rheumatology, Bichat Hospital, Paris, France. Address correspondence to Dr. Kahn; E-mail: mfkahn@dbmail.com

REFERENCE


J Rheumatol 2010;37:10; doi:10.3899/jrheum.100485