

Treg/Th17 cell balance and Phytohaemagglutinin activation of T lymphocytes in peripheral blood of systemic sclerosis patients.

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Biostatistics statement: For the analysis of the data's distribution, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used. In cases of normal distribution, mean \pm standard error (SE), minimum and maximum values were determined and a two-sample t-test, as well as ANOVA were used for further statistical evaluation of the experimental data. In cases of non-normal distribution, median, interquartile range [IQR], minimum, and maximum values, were calculated and the Mann-Whitney test was applied. The strength of linear relationship between two continuous variables was examined using Pearson's correlation coefficient. Differences were considered as significant at $P < 0.05$. All statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics (IBM® SPSS® Statistics, Version 19).

All the statistical methods used in this study have been carefully reviewed by Tsvetelina Velikova, MD, PhD, a certified biostatistician, from University Hospital Saint Ivan Rilski, Sofia, Bulgaria.

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