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**Title:** Silent microaspiration in idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis: The role of videolaryngoscopy

Dr. Emanuela 24869 Rossi [rossi.emanuela81@gmail.com](mailto:rossi.emanuela81@gmail.com) MD <sup>1</sup>, Dr. Ariel 24870 Floriani [floriani.ariel@gmail.com](mailto:floriani.ariel@gmail.com) MD <sup>1</sup>, Dr. Claudia 24871 Rinaldo [claudia\\_rinaldo@libero.it](mailto:claudia_rinaldo@libero.it) MD <sup>1</sup>, Dr. Nazarena 24872 Nannini [nazarena.nannini@unipd.it](mailto:nazarena.nannini@unipd.it) MD <sup>1</sup>, Dr. Giuseppe 24873 Marulli [beppemarulli@libero.it](mailto:beppemarulli@libero.it) MD <sup>1</sup>, Dr. Monica 24876 Loy [monica.loy@sanita.padova.it](mailto:monica.loy@sanita.padova.it) MD <sup>1</sup>, Prof. Federico 24878 Rea [federico.rea@unipd.it](mailto:federico.rea@unipd.it) MD <sup>1</sup>, Prof. Fiorella 24881 Calabrese [fiorella.calabrese@unipd.it](mailto:fiorella.calabrese@unipd.it) MD <sup>1</sup> and Dr. Elisabetta 24886 Balestro [elisabetta\\_balestro@hotmail.com](mailto:elisabetta_balestro@hotmail.com) MD <sup>1</sup>. <sup>1</sup> Department of Cardiac, Thoracic and Vascular Sciences, University of Padova Medical School, Padova, Italy .

**Body:** A strong association between gastroesophageal reflux (GER) and idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) has been reported. A significant proportion of patients may have signs of microaspiration and still remain asymptomatic. Videolaryngoscopy can be a useful tool to detect silent microaspiration, which to date has never been investigated in IPF. The aim of the study was to assess signs of micro-aspiration by videolaryngoscopy in patients with IPF and to relate them with clinical findings. We recruited 20 IPF patients (mean age 52 + 7 yrs). We investigated the presence/absence of GER symptoms and performed videolaryngoscopy to evaluate abnormal laryngeal findings considered indirect signs of micro-aspiration. Three out of twenty patients (15%) had classic GER symptoms, while 17 (85%) did not report any kind of GER symptoms. Among asymptomatic patients, 5 (29%) had indirect signs of microaspiration at videolaryngoscopy while the remaining twelve had no such signs. Of interest, IPF patients with laryngeal abnormalities at videolaryngoscopy showed a lower FVC% at the diagnosis compared to patients without such abnormalities [46%(45-82) vs 75%(72-87) p=0,03]. Conversely, no differences in age, smoking history and BMI were found between the two groups of patients. In conclusion our study suggests that videolaryngoscopy may be a useful diagnostic tool to detect silent microaspiration in patients with IPF even in the absence of GER symptoms. These findings may have important therapeutic implications.