Infliximab in refractory sarcoidosis: the ild care experience

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Results

Table 1. Summary of inflammatory laboratory parameters, lung function test results and HRCT score according to Oberstein5 of the sarcoidosis patients studied and the effect on these clinical manifestations after 12 months treatment with infliximab.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Baseline total population</th>
<th>After 12 months</th>
<th>p-value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRP (2-9 µg·mL−1)</td>
<td>5.5±11.0 (n=77)</td>
<td>2.6±3.0* (n=70)</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACE (9-25 U·L−1)</td>
<td>20.6±13.8 (n=77)</td>
<td>16.5±6.4* (n=70)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>sIL-2R (240-3154 pg·mL−1)</td>
<td>2970±3150 (n=77)</td>
<td>1498±765* (n=70)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FVC, % predicted</td>
<td>93.0±16.1 (n=77)</td>
<td>95.8±16.3 (n=70)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>DLCO, % predicted</td>
<td>76.8±16.7 (n=77)</td>
<td>80.2±19.3 (n=70)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRCT (Oberstein total score; n=28)</td>
<td>7.9±3.1 (n=77)</td>
<td>6.1±3.6* (n=70)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All values are presented as mean ± SD; *p<0.01.

Figure 1. HRCT before and after one year treatment with 5 mg/kg infliximab showing a reduction of the parenchymal lesions.

Figure 2. Fatigue Assessment Scale (FAS) score and Small Fiber Neuropathy Screenings List (SFNSL) score of the studied sarcoidosis patients before (white bars) and after 12 months treatment (gray bars) with 5 mg/kg infliximab.

Fatigue was less prominent (FAS score: 29.9±7.8 vs 34.1±7.5; p<0.001), and the SFN related symptoms improved (SFNSL 23.1±14.7 vs 28.5±15.0; p<0.001; Figure 2). The exercise capacity (6 minute walking distance) and fatigue improved in >70% of the patients, 20% were stable. Seven cases (9%) had to stop due to antibody formation, 31 are still on treatment.

Conclusions

Infliximab appeared successful in more than 70% of the sarcoidosis patients with refractory chronic sarcoidosis demonstrating:

- a reduction of fatigue and symptoms related to small fiber neuropathy
- a reduction of the inflammatory markers of disease activity
- an improvement of HRCT features

Even severe cases with Chest X-ray stage IV responded well. A dose interval of 4-5 weeks seemed to be the most appropriate.

References