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NEW INSIGHTS INTO TREATMENT EFFECTIVENESS IN PEOPLE WITH AXIAL SPONDYLOARTHRITIS

Recognizing individual differences is important to be able to deliver personalized care

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New evidence presented at the 2022 EULAR Congress reveals sex differences in physiology, disease presentation, and response to treatment in people with axial spondyloarthritis (axSpA), as well as the impact of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) in people with radiographic disease.

axSpA is a chronic inflammatory rheumatic disease that mainly affects the spine and sacroiliac joints. It can cause significant pain and disability. Many different agents are available to treat people with axSpA, but they do not always work for everybody.

Previously, pooled data from randomized controlled trials have demonstrated reduced treatment efficacy of a tumour necrosis factor inhibitor (TNFi) in females compared to males with ankylosing spondylitis.

Dr Pagoon Hellamand and colleagues sought to validate prior studies using data from a large multinational cohort based on real-life clinical practice. In total, 6,451 axSpA patients were assessed for treatment response. Analysis of the results showed that the probability for females to have a clinically important improvement was 15% lower compared to males. In addition, TNFi retention rates were significantly lower in females. Recognizing these sex differences is relevant for customized patient care, and may improve patient education.

Another group working on axSpA looked at whether treatment with NSAIDs is associated with retardation of radiographic spinal progression. To date there have been conflicting reports: previous analysis of GESPIC – the GERman SPondyloarthritis Inception Cohort – showed that higher NSAID intake may retard new bone formation in radiographic axSpA. However, it remained unclear whether cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitors (COX2i) might have a stronger effect than non-selective ones, and if the effect could also be observed in non-radiographic disease.

Dr Murat Torgutalp' et al. looked at 243 patients with early axSpA from GESPIC to work out the association between NSAID intake and radiographic spinal progression over 2 years. Overall, the results showed that higher NSAID intake is associated with lower radiographic spinal progression, particularly in patients with radiographic axSpA. COX2i might possess a stronger inhibitory effect on radiographic progression as compared to non-selective NSAIDs.

Source

Hellamand P, et al. Sex differences in effectiveness of first-line tumor necrosis factor inhibitors in axial spondyloarthritis; results from fifteen countries in the EuroSpA Research Collaboration Network. Presented at EULAR 2022; abstract OP0020.

Torgutalp M, et al. Treatment with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs is associated with retardation of radiographic spinal progression in patients with axial spondyloarthritis. Presented at EULAR 2022; abstract OP0021.

About EULAR

EULAR – the European Alliance of Associations for Rheumatology – is the European umbrella organisation representing scientific societies, health professional associations and organisations for people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs). EULAR aims to reduce the burden of RMDs on individuals and society and to improve the treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of RMDs. To this end, EULAR fosters excellence in education and research in the field of rheumatology. It promotes the translation of research advances into daily care and fights for the recognition of the needs of people with RMDs by the EU institutions through advocacy action.

About the EULAR European Congress of Rheumatology

Since its introduction in 2000, the annual EULAR European Congress of Rheumatology has become the primary platform for exchange of scientific and clinical information in Europe. It is also a renowned forum for interaction between medical doctors, scientists, people with arthritis/rheumatism, health professionals and representatives of the pharmaceutical industry worldwide. The EULAR congress is usually held in June in one of the major cities in Europe.

The scientific programme covers a wide range of topics on clinical innovations, clinical, translational and basic science. Meetings set up by associations of people with arthritis/rheumatism, health professionals and the health care industry complement the programme. The poster sessions, offering lively interaction between presenters and participants, are regarded by many as the heart of the congress.

Over the years, the EULAR Congress has gained a reputation of being a most innovative platform for the practicing physician particularly with respect to the acquisition of information on novel clinical research. The congress attracts more than 18,000 delegates from more than 130 countries.

The aim of the EULAR European Congress of Rheumatology is to provide a forum of the highest standard for scientific, both clinical and basic, educational, and social exchange between professionals involved in rheumatology, liaising with patient organisations, in order to achieve progress in the clinical care of people with rheumatic diseases.

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