Nature Reviews Rheumatology 8, 122 (2012); published online 31 January 2011;
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IN BRIEF

LUPUS NEPHRITIS

Negative results for the LUNAR phase III study of rituximab

The LUNAR study results show that rituximab therapy does not improve clinical outcomes at 1 year in patients with active proliferative lupus nephritis concomitantly treated with mycophenolate mofetil and corticosteroids. Although rituximab depleted CD19⁺ B cells and improved serum levels of complement (C3 and C4) and anti-dsDNA antibodies, renal response rates were similar in the treatment and placebo groups (45.8% and 56.9%, respectively). Furthermore, adverse effects such as neutropenia and hypotension were increased in patients receiving rituximab.

Original article Rovin, B. H. et al. Efficacy and safety of rituximab in patients with active proliferative lupus nephritis: the lupus nephritis assessment with rituximab (LUNAR) study. *Arth. Rheum.* doi:10.1002/art.34359

CONNECTIVE TISSUE DISEASES

Warfarin unlikely to improve survival in patients with SSsPAH

Warfarin probably did not improve survival in a retrospective study of 164 patients with systemic sclerosis (SSc)-related pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) or idiopathic PAH, despite being a recommended treatment. After adjustment for baseline differences in disease severity and treatment, Bayesian models indicated a very low probability that warfarin had improved the median survival duration by ≥6 months (23.5% for patients with SSsPAH and 27.7% for patients with idiopathic PAH).

Original article Johnson, S. R. et al. Warfarin in systemic sclerosis-associated and idiopathic pulmonary arterial hypertension. A Bayesian approach to evaluating treatment for uncommon disease. *J. Rheum.* doi:10.3899/jrheum.110765

FIBROMYALGIA

Improved sleep and pain levels with pregabalin treatment

A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled crossover study of 119 patients with fibromyalgia has shown that daily treatment with 300–450 mg pregabalin can considerably improve disturbed sleep. Polysomnography revealed that patients had significantly shorter periods of wakefulness after sleep onset during active treatment phases than in placebo phases (week 4 difference –19.2 min, 95% CI –26.7 to –11.6 min). Pain scores were also considerably reduced during active treatment.

Original article Roth, T. et al. Effect of pregabalin on sleep in patients with fibromyalgia and sleep maintenance disturbance: a randomized, placebo-controlled, 2-way crossover polysomnography study. *Arth. Care Res.* doi:10.1002/acr.21595

CONNECTIVE TISSUE DISEASES

New clinical score for predicting delayed gastric emptying

A prospective study of 57 patients with systemic sclerosis (SSc) has unveiled a correlation between delayed gastric emptying (which affected nearly half of the participants, and was detected using the ¹³C octanoic acid breath test) and a global score ≥5 for digestive symptoms. The researchers used this global score in combination with the presence of interstitial lung disease, esophageal motor impairment and mucosal gastric abnormalities to develop a highly sensitive (0.93) and specific (0.77) risk prediction score for delayed gastric emptying.

Original article Marie, I. et al. Delayed gastric emptying using ¹³C octanoic acid breath test in systemic sclerosis. *Arth. Rheum.* doi:10.1002/art.34374