

# EFFICACY AND SAFETY OF THE USE OF TOCILIZUMAB IN RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Álvarez-Payero M, Martín-Vila A, Pérez-Parente D, Martínez-López de Castro N, Vázquez-López C. Pharmacy Department, University Hospital of Vigo (Meixoeiro Hospital). Spain. 17th Congress of the EAHP - 21-23 March 2012, Milan, Italy



## BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE:

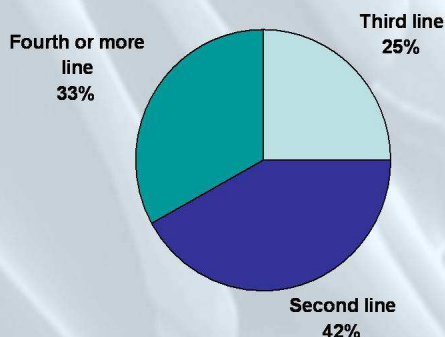
Tocilizumab(TCZ) is a new Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) treatment which binds specifically to both soluble and membrane-bound IL-6 receptors. Our propose was to review the response and safety of TCZ.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS:

- Retrospective and descriptive study in a General University Hospital.
- All patients under TCZ treatment between December 2009 and May 2011 were included.
- Patients were identified using Dipex® and Bristol® software. Data collection was made through the pharmaco-therapeutic profile and medical chart review.
- Data recorded included: demographics data, diagnosis, previous treatments, duration of treatment with TCZ, concomitant treatment, Clinical's response criteria: pain, inflammation of the joints(DAS28), morning stiffness, according to Spanish Society of Rheumatology, adverse events (AE) and cost.

## RESULTS:

12 patients (8 women) with seropositive rheumatoid arthritis, mean age:  $53,42 \pm 14,93$  years. Median time from diagnosis of RA:  $9,17 \pm 6,23$  years. Pre-treatment DAS-28 was  $5,45 \pm 1,56$ . Mean duration of treatment:  $8,25 \pm 5,46$  months.



25% of patients used TCZ-MTX, TCZ-Leflunomide (8,34%) and without concomitant disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (66,67%). 75% of patients took steroids concomitantly.

Dosage: 8 mg/kg/ 4 weeks. 11 patients had any type of response to TCZ after 3 cycles (their subjective symptoms improved). Only 2 patients had DAS28 data (3,04 and 2,08) after 3 cycles. In 2 patients the treatment was stopped: 1 lack of response and 1 AE (was notified to the National Pharmacovigilance Center and).

Adverse events	
Hyperlipidaemia	25%
Grade II neutropenia	8%

The total costs associated with the treatment were €97.167 since December 2009. Average cost/patient was: €8.097.

Annual cost of treatment/patient: €12.087

## CONCLUSIONS:

TCZ is a therapeutic alternative to use when conventional therapies have failed. TCZ is well tolerated but cholesterol levels should be monitored during treatment. To assess the response with data available is difficult, because DAS28 is not collected according to Spanish Society of Rheumatology recommendations. Pharmacists should get involved in the evaluation of the tolerance and the cost-effectiveness of this type of drugs.