

COVID-19 Patients with Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis on Biologic Immunosuppressant Therapy versus Apremilast in North Spain

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ABSTRACT

Immunosuppressive and immunomodulatory treatments are critical for the management of inflammatory and autoimmune conditions such as psoriasis or psoriatic arthritis. Like in those illnesses, the lung injury and acute respiratory distress shown in COVID-19 patients are the result of a disruption in the balance of pro- and anti-inflammatory cytokines. This hyperinflammatory response to SARS-CoV-2, associated with the severity of the coronavirus disease, is called the cytokine storm. There is a growing concern regarding how patients on immunosuppressant biologic therapies might be at higher risk of being infected and whether they need to discontinue their treatment preemptively. Clinical data on COVID-19 infected patients with psoriasis or psoriatic arthritis are still scarce. Here, we presented seven cases of this type of patients. The patient infected with COVID-19 on apremilast and the one on apremilast with infected spouse showed the best safety profile and mildest symptoms. One of the secukinumab patients also presented a relatively good outcome. Infliximab patients and the one with serious comorbidities showed the worst outcome. Even though more clinical data are yet needed to draw strong conclusions, apremilast could be a safer alternative for dermatology and rheumatology patients in case of clinically important active infection.

Keywords: Apremilast, Psoriasis, Psoriatic arthritis, Cytokines, COVID-19

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