ACHIEVEMENT OF LOW DISEASE ACTIVITY IN LUPUS PATIENTS TREATED WITH BELIMUMAB INDEPENDENT OF SEROLOGIC STATUS AT BASELINE: A REAL-LIFE OBSERVATIONAL STUDY


1Rheumatology and Clinical Immunology, 4th Department of Internal Medicine, “Attikon” University Hospital, Athens, 2Rheumatology and Clinical Immunology, University Hospital of Heraklion, Heraklion, 3Department of Rheumatology, “Asklepieion” General Hospital, 4Rheumatology Unit, First Department of Propaedeutic Internal Medicine, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens School of Medicine, Athens, 5Division of Rheumatology, Dept of Internal Medicine, University of Patras Medical School and Patras University Hospital, Patras, 6Department of Rheumatology, “G. Gennimatas” General Hospital, 72nd Department of Internal Medicine, “Ippokrateion” General Hospital, 8Sismanogleio – Amalia Fleming General Hospital, 9Department of Rheumatology, “Evangelismos” General Hospital, 10Department of Physiology, School of Medicine, University of Athens, Athens, 11Department of Rheumatology, “Ippokrateion” General Hospital, 12Private rheumatologist, Thessaloniki, Greece, 13Department of Rheumatology, Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey.

Background: Low disease activity is a validated target of systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) therapy.

Objectives: To assess the ability of belimumab to induce low disease activity states in real-life setting.

Methods: Multicentre prospective observational study of SLE patients receiving belimumab due to active disease, refractory to at least one conventional immunosuppressant. Disease activity, including attainment of lupus low disease activity state (LLDAS) and remission-on-glucocorticoids (GC) (clinical SLEDAI-2K=0 with prednisone ≤5 mg/day), accrual of organ damage, flares and side effects were documented.

Results: Ninety-one patients were included [94.5% women, mean (SD) age 45.9 (12.5) years]. Most frequent manifestations were arthritis (76.7%), rash (72.5%), hair loss (47.2%) and mucosal ulcers (27.5%). Median (range) duration of treatment was 10.5 (3.0–42.1) months. Belimumab decreased average SLEDAI-2K, physician global assessment and daily prednisone dose over time, as early as 3 months after initiation. Complete withdrawal of GC was achieved in 17.8%, 22.5%, 31.7% and 23.3% at 3, 6, 9 and 12 months, respectively. The number of flares and severe flares was reduced by 62% and 50%, respectively, during the first year of treatment. Complete withdrawal of GC was achieved in 17.8%, 22.5%, 31.7% and 23.3% at 3, 6, 9 and 12 months, respectively. The number of flares and severe flares was reduced by 62% and 50%, respectively, during the first year of treatment. Most frequent manifestations were arthritis (76.7%), rash (72.5%), hair loss (47.2%) and mucosal ulcers (27.5%). Median (range) duration of treatment was 10.5 (3.0–42.1) months. Belimumab decreased average SLEDAI-2K, physician global assessment and daily prednisone dose over time, as early as 3 months after initiation. Complete withdrawal of GC was achieved in 17.8%, 22.5%, 31.7% and 23.3% at 3, 6, 9 and 12 months, respectively.