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Biologic systemic therapy for moderate to-severe psoriasis: Emphasis on quality of life

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Statement of the Problem: Psoriasis is one of the autoimmune diseases of particular interest. It is a chronic, relapsing and remitting inflammatory skin and joint disease that has a prevalence of 2-3% worldwide. Ethnic variations have been identified and Caucasians are more likely to suffer from the disease. Chronic plaque psoriasis is a lifelong disease with a substantial impact on the physical well-being and quality of a patient's life. As with all autoimmune diseases, the pathophysiology of psoriasis is complicated and not yet fully understood. However, the signs and symptoms appear to be caused by hyper proliferation and inflammation of epidermal cells. In psoriasis, an immunologic response involving T-lymphocytes and cytokines alters the epidermal skin cell cycle resulting in psoriatic plaques. Like other autoimmune diseases a mixture of genetic, environmental and behavioral influences are involved and or are associated with its development.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Randomized double-blind, placebo controlled studies have reviewed using the data basis of Cochrane, Embase and PubMed. 4 biologic therapies (adalimumab, efalizumab, Etanercept and infliximab) which had been thoroughly revised are now licensed for the treatment of moderate-to-severe psoriasis.

Conclusion & Significance: Randomized double-blind, placebo controlled studies have demonstrated the short-term efficacy and safety of all therapies for psoriasis. However, these data may not reflect practical day-to-day experience. Patients who need such biologics are those who are suffering from the most severe forms of psoriasis. However, combinations of traditional systemic and biologic therapies may be required. Treatments are time consuming and ineffective, and patients experience side effect as the most negative aspect of current treatments. Recommendations are made for treatment is also reflected in the Quality of Life research. Also, there is ample evidence that psoriasis can have a profound effect on patients' functioning and wellbeing.

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