



DAREMUS

Dansk Selskab for Forskning i Multipel Sklerose

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TITLE:

Anti TNF-alpha treatment and CNS demyelination

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INTRODUCTION

Former research indicates that Multiple sclerosis (MS) is associated with TNF-alpha. However, TNF-alpha inhibitors have proven to increase disease activity in MS patients. TNF-alpha inhibitors are used for treatment of various autoimmune diseases such as Crohn's disease and Rheumatoid arthritis, and in the recent years the consumption of these drugs have increased manyfold. At the same time there has been reports of several cases of demyelinating events as adverse side effect to anti TNF-alpha treatment. Thus we hope that the examination of this possible association can contribute to further understanding of the pathogenesis of MS.

METHODS

We did a literature review of available material on documented CNS demyelination in patients receiving anti TNF-alpha treatment. Articles from PubMed was obtained by using search terms "Demyelinating Disease", "Multiple Sclerosis", "Optic neuritis", and "Tumor Necrosis Factor-alpha". Furthermore we looked for patients with suspected or confirmed demyelination after anti TNF-alpha treatment among patients at Glostrup University Hospital, Denmark from 2002 to 2013. This was done by searching for patients with diagnoses Crohn's disease, Ulcerative Colitis or Rheumatoid Arthritis seen at the Department of Neurology.

RESULTS

In the literature we found 89 cases described with MRI-verified CNS demyelination after treatment with TNF-alpha inhibitors. We found 4 patients with confirmed CNS demyelination after anti-TNF treatment among patients seen in the Department of Neurology at Glostrup University Hospital from 2002 to 2013.

CONCLUSION

A causal relationship between treatment with anti TNF-alpha and MS or other CNS demyelinating events can neither be confirmed nor rejected. More analysis is required and studies across medical specialties may be helpful to gather the required data.