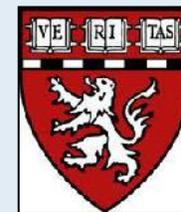


Giant Cell Arteritis & Polymyalgia Rheumatica - Novel Approaches -

HMS CME Course Internal Medicine: Comprehensive Review and Update 2022

June 6, 2022



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Disclosures

- Roche/Genentech, research support
- Kaniksa, consulting
- Janssen, consulting

I will be discussing “off-label” uses of the following medications:

- Methotrexate
- Ustekinumab
- Abatacept
- Mavrilimumab
- Secukinumab
- Upadacitinib
- Guselkumab

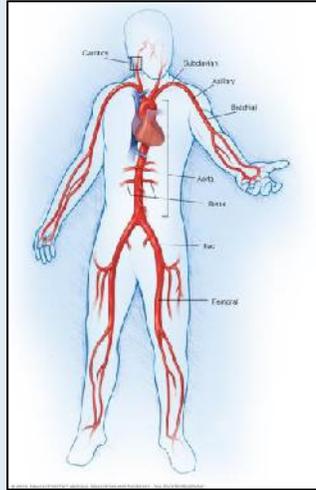
Objectives

- Review the epidemiology, clinical presentation, and diagnosis of giant cell arteritis (GCA) and polymyalgia rheumatica (PMR)
- Recognize the evidence supporting the standard of care for GCA and PMR
- Discuss recent treatment advances for GCA and PMR

GCA and PMR definition and epidemiology

GCA Definition

- Large / medium sized-vessel vasculitis
- Granulomatous inflammation
- Aorta and main aortic branches

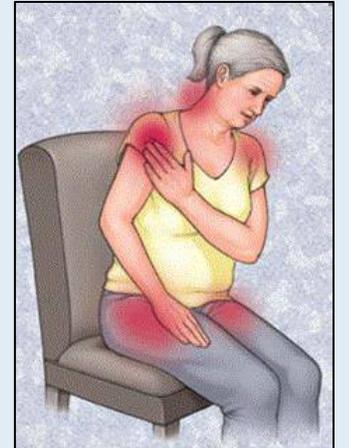


GCA Epidemiology

- Most common type of vasculitis in adults
- Elderly (peak age ~72 years)
- Caucasian population
- Lifetime risk 0.5% men - 1% women
- ~220,000 cases in the United States

PMR Definition

- Arthritis / periartthritis of the shoulder and hip girdles
 - Primary PMR
 - PMR associated with GCA



PMR Epidemiology

- Same as GCA
- 3 times more common than GCA
- Second most common rheumatic disease after rheumatoid arthritis

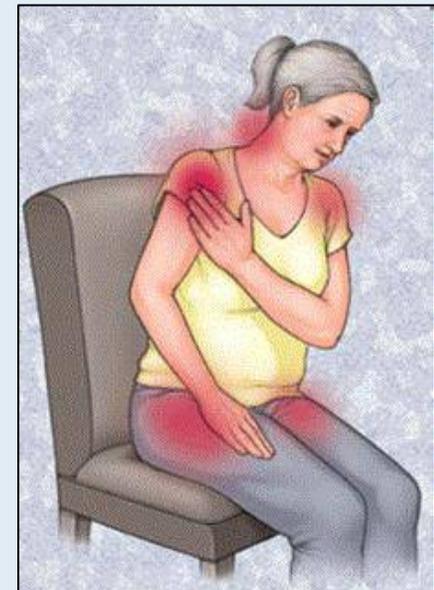
Clinical manifestations

- Cranial symptoms:
 - New onset headaches
 - Scalp tenderness
 - Jaw claudication
 - Temporal artery abnormalities
 - Visual symptoms (e.g., amaurosis fugax, episodic blurred vision, diplopia)
- Polymyalgia rheumatica (PMR)
 - 50-60% of GCA patients
 - 15% of primary PMR patients "evolve" to GCA
- Constitutional symptoms
- Laboratory abnormalities (suggestive, but not specific)



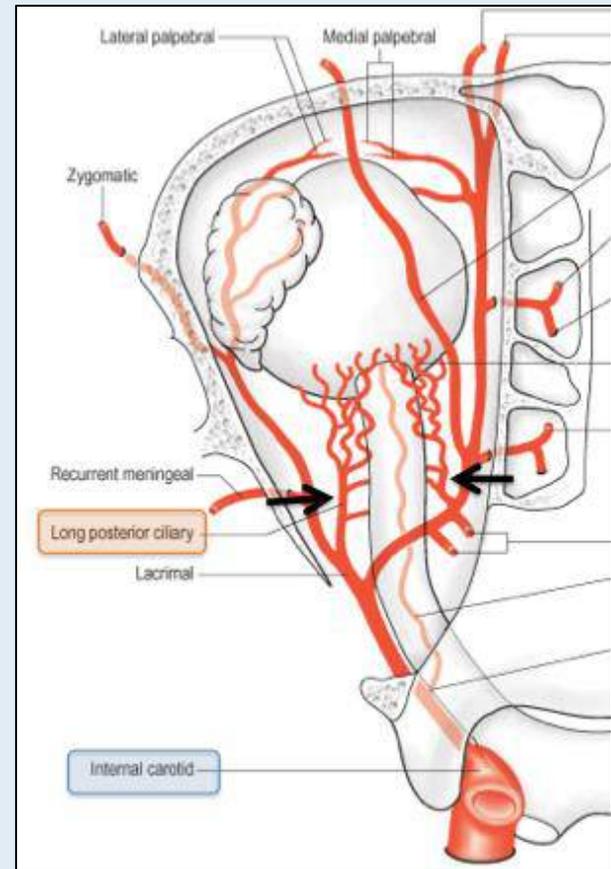
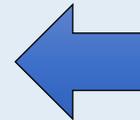
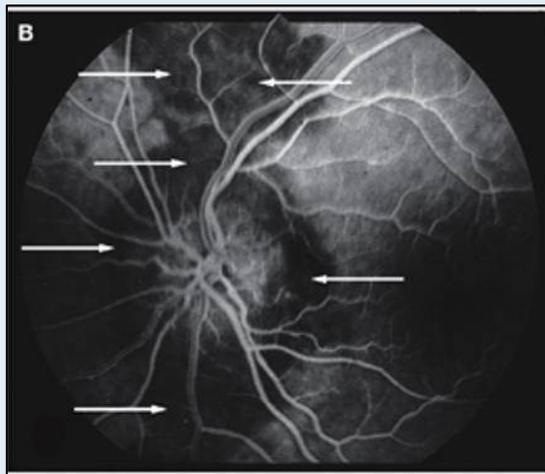
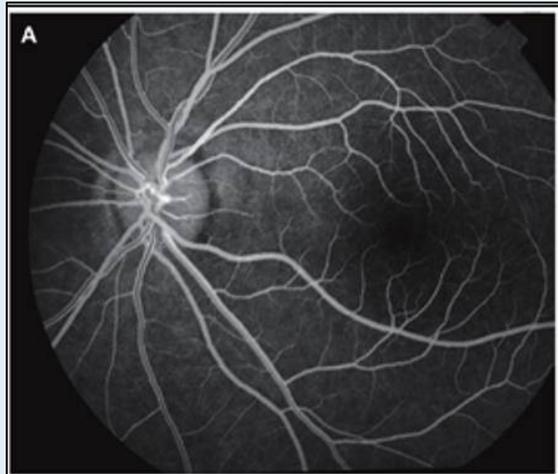
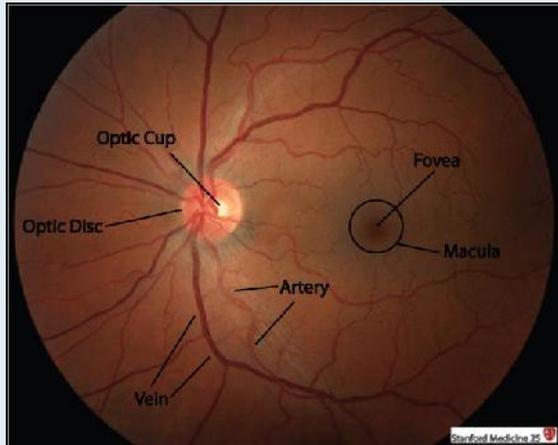
- Increased inflammatory markers (90-95%)

- Mild to moderate anemia, thrombocytosis, rarely leucocytosis



GCA diagnostic delay - Blindness 10-20%

Arteritic Anterior Ischemic Optic Neuropathy (A-AION)



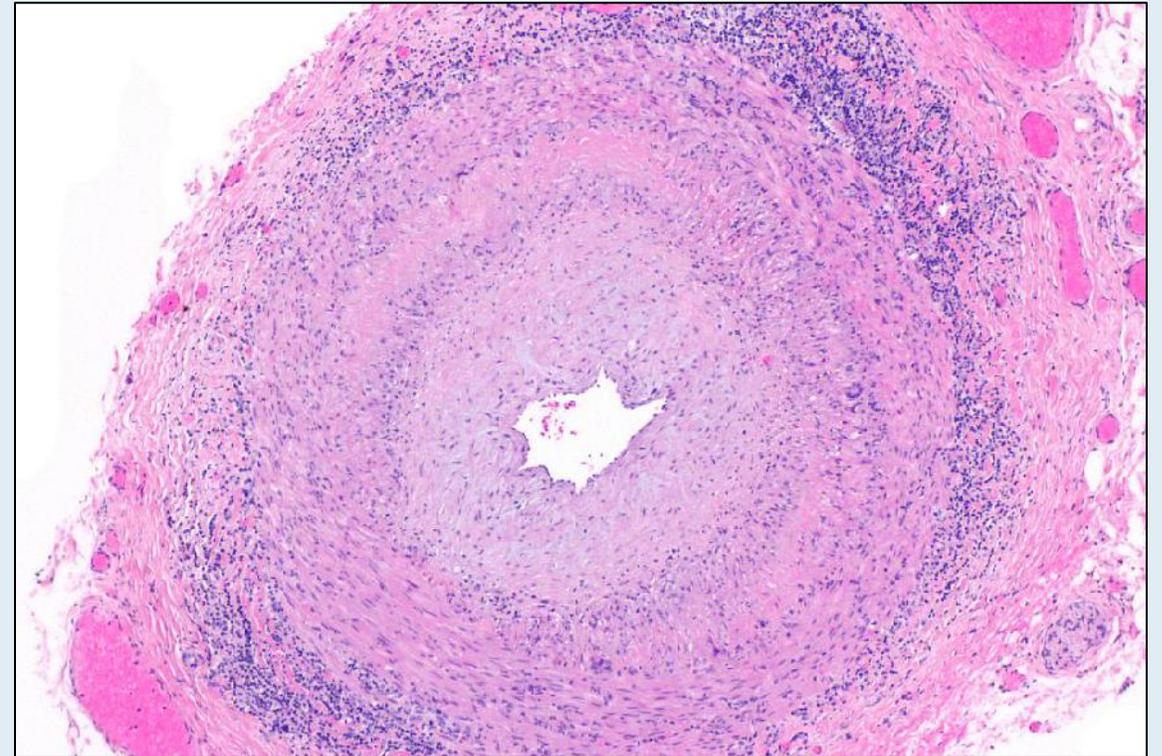
Occlusion of the long-posterior ciliary arteries (>90%)

GCA Diagnosis - Temporal artery biopsy

2021 American College of Rheumatology / Vasculitis Foundation Guideline for the Management of Giant Cell Arteritis and Takayasu Arteritis

Conditional recommendations

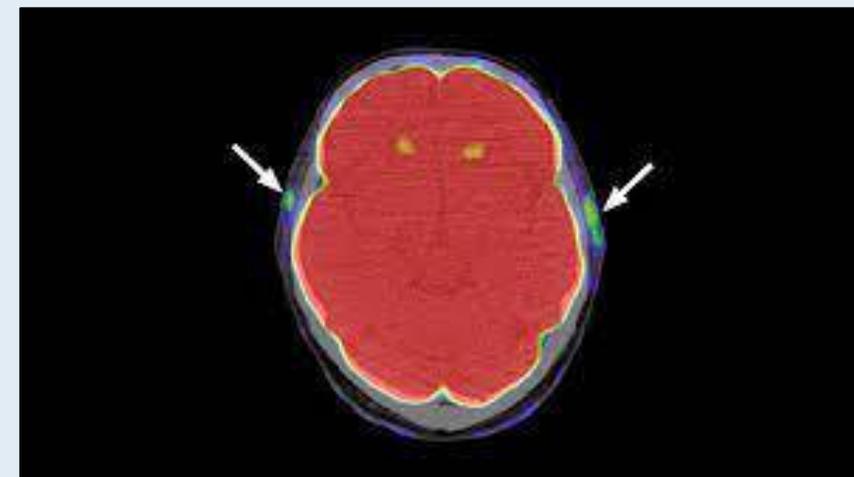
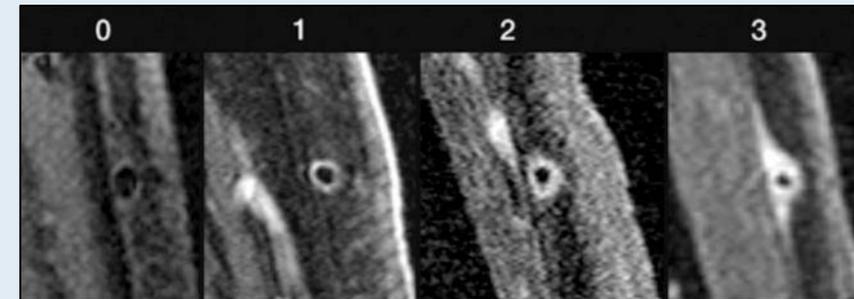
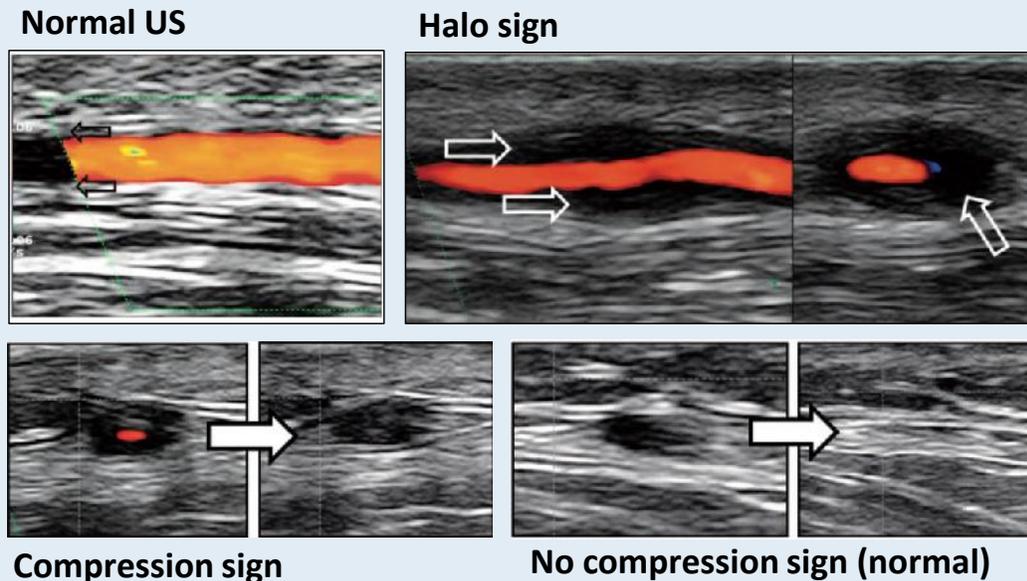
- Initial diagnostic test
- Unilateral over bilateral biopsies
- Length > 1 cm
- Within 2 weeks of starting glucocorticoids



GCA Diagnosis - Vascular imaging (extra-cranial arteries)

Superficial cranial arteries

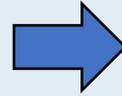
- **Vascular ultrasound (US)** - Initial test recommended by the 2018 EULAR LVV imaging guidelines
- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)
- PET/CT



GCA Diagnosis - Vascular imaging (large arteries)

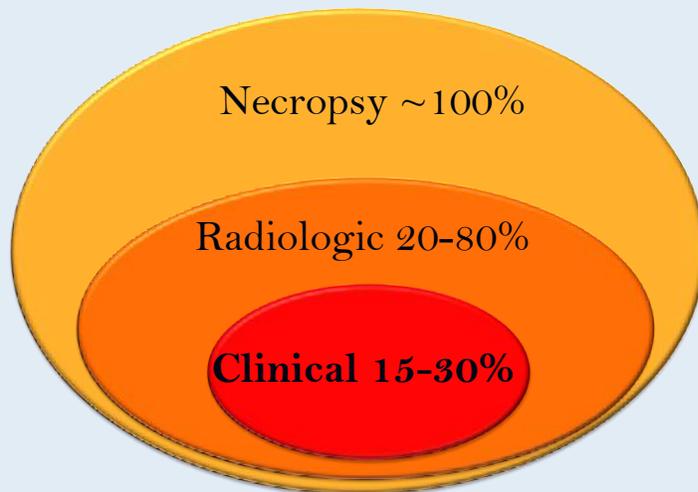
Large arteries

- Computed tomography angiography (CTA)
- MRI / MR angiography (MRA)
- Positron emission tomography (PET)
- PET/CTA and PET/MR
- Vascular ultrasound

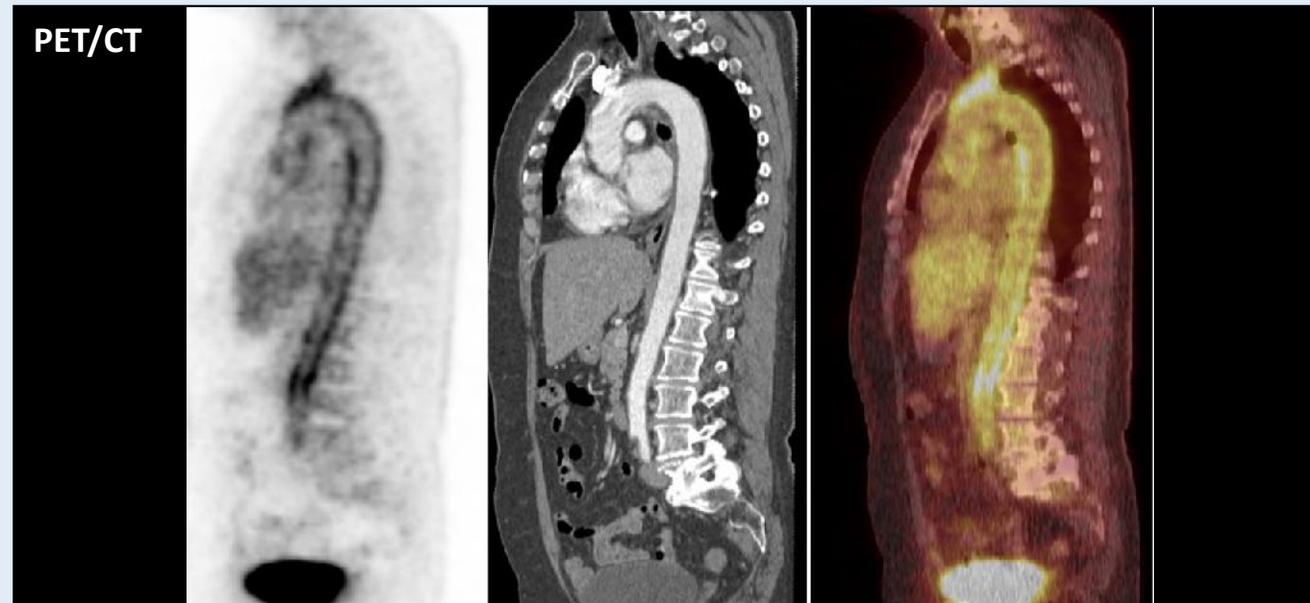


Radiologic lesions - “lumens and walls”

- Wall thickening, edema, contrast uptake and/or ^{18}F -FDG uptake
- Diffuse luminal stenosis, occlusion, and/or aneurysmal dilatation



Large vessel involvement



Oseberg G. Acta Med Scan Suppl 1972; Kerman et al. Sem Arthritis Rheum 2018; Gonzalez-Gay et al. Medicine 2004; Nuenninghoff et al. Arthritis Rheum 2003; Garcia-Martinez et al. Arthritis Rheum 2008, Blockmans et al. Arthritis Rheum 2006; Garcia-Martinez et al. Ann Rheum Dis 2013

The diagnosis of primary PMR is clinical

2012 ACR/EULAR provisional classification criteria for PMR

Table 4 Scoring algorithm with and without optional ultrasound criterion—required criteria: age 50 years or greater, bilateral shoulder aching and abnormal CRP and/or ESR

Criteria	Clinical criteria (without ultrasound)*		Criteria including ultrasound†	
	Odds ratio (95% CI)	Points	Odds ratio (95% CI)	Points
Morning stiffness duration > 45 min	6.2 (3.2 to 11.8)	2	5.0 (2.8 to 9.1)	2
Hip pain or limited range of motion	2.1 (1.1 to 4.0)	1	1.4 (0.8 to 2.6)	1
Absence of RF or ACPA	3.0 (1.3 to 6.8)	2	5.2 (2.1 to 12.6)	2
Absence of other joint pain	2.7 (1.4 to 5.0)	1	2.2 (1.3 to 4.0)	1
Ultrasound criteria				
At least one shoulder with subdeltoid bursitis and/or biceps tenosynovitis and/or glenohumeral synovitis (either posterior or axillary) and at least one hip with synovitis and/or trochanteric bursitis			2.6 (1.3 to 5.3)	1§
Both shoulders with subdeltoid bursitis, biceps tenosynovitis or glenohumeral synovitis			2.1 (1.2 to 3.7)	1¶

ACPA, anticitrullinated protein antibody; CRP, C-reactive protein; ESR, erythrocyte sedimentation rate; RF, rheumatoid factor; CI, confidence interval.

*The optimal cut point is 4. A patient with a score of 4 or more is categorised as having polymyalgia rheumatica (PMR).

†The optimal cut point is 5. A patient with a score of 5 or more is categorised as having PMR.

§ P = 0.008.

¶ P = 0.009.



Cataratas del Iguazu
Misiones, Argentina

GCA TREATMENT
- Standard of care -

Treatment Quiz #1 - GCA

A 75 y/o patient with biopsy-confirmed GCA achieves clinical remission with prednisone 60 mg followed by taper. After 6 months of treatment, he now takes 7 mg/day of prednisone and reports renewed focal headache and PMR symptoms. The erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) and C-reactive protein (CRP) are elevated.

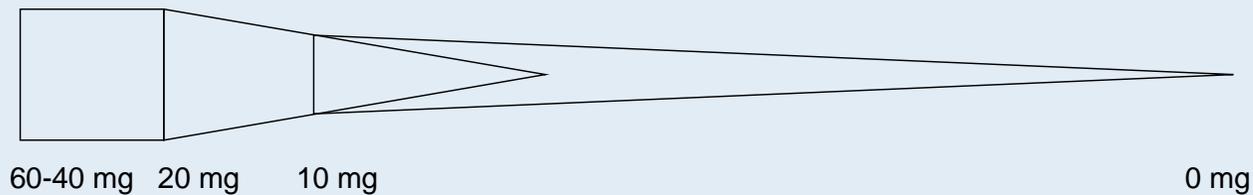
Your diagnosis is GCA relapse

What is your treatment recommendation?

- A. Continue a slow prednisone taper by 1 mg every 4 weeks**
- B. Maintain the prednisone dose at 7 mg/day**
- C. Increase the prednisone dose to 40-60 mg/day**
- D. Increase the prednisone dose to 40-60 mg/day and add methotrexate**
- E. Increase the prednisone dose to 40-60 mg/day and add tocilizumab**

Glucocorticoids for GCA

- Tapers over > 12 months
- Dose modification based on clinical disease activity
- Biomarkers to assess disease activity have limitations
- No standardized tapering regimen



~12-18 months, frequently more

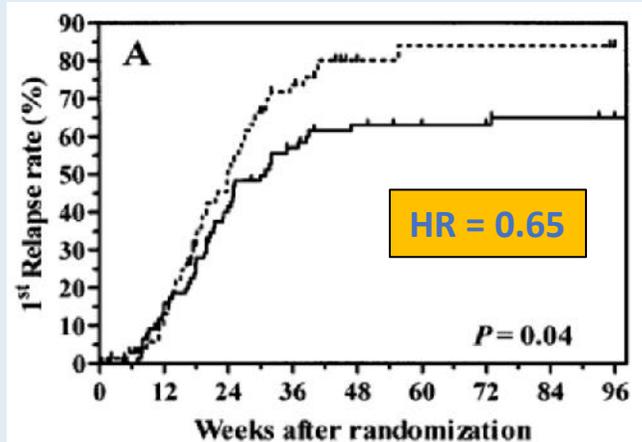
Relapse rate in patients treated only with glucocorticoids

N/Follow-Up (years)	Relapse Rate	Relapse Definition	Author (design)
106/7.8	64%	Clinical \pm APR	Alba (prospective) ¹
286/5.1	79%	Clinical or APR	Labarca (retrospective) ²
157/6.7	36.5%	Clinical + APR	Restuccia (retrospective) ³
75/~3.0	65.3%	Clinical \pm APR	Hernandez-Rodriguez (retrospective) ⁴

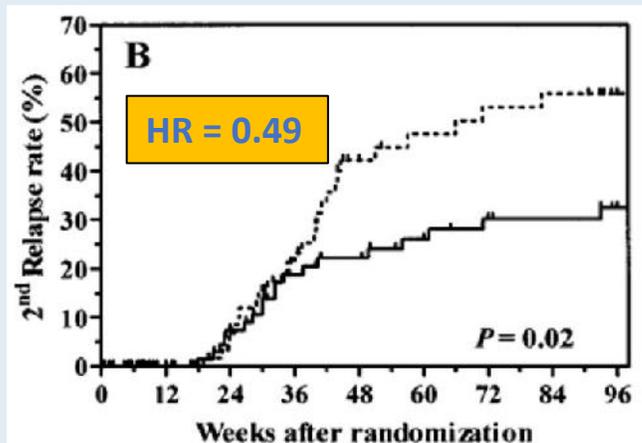
APR, acute phase reactants (C-reactive protein and erythrocyte sedimentation rate)

Non-biologic immunosuppressants for GCA

1st relapse



2nd relapse



Ineffective

- Azathioprine - DaSilva et al. Ann Rheum Dis 1986
- Cyclophosphamide - De Vita et al. Intern Med 1992
- Cyclosporine - Schaufelberger et al. Scand J Rheumatol 2006
- Leflunomide - Adizie et al. Int J Clin Pract 2021

Partially effective

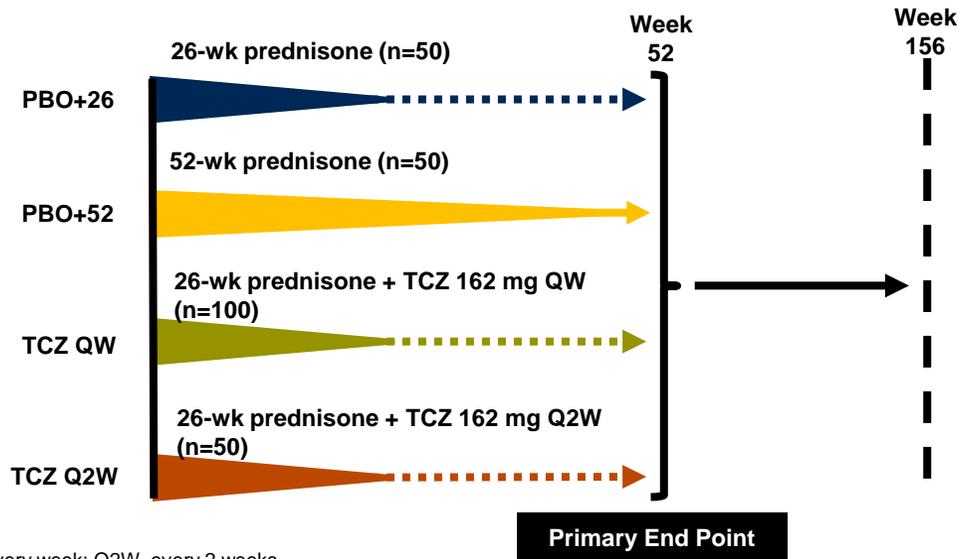
- Methotrexate

Spiera et al. Clin Exp Rheumatol 2001
Hoffman et al. Arthritis Rheum 2002
Jover et al. Medicine 2001

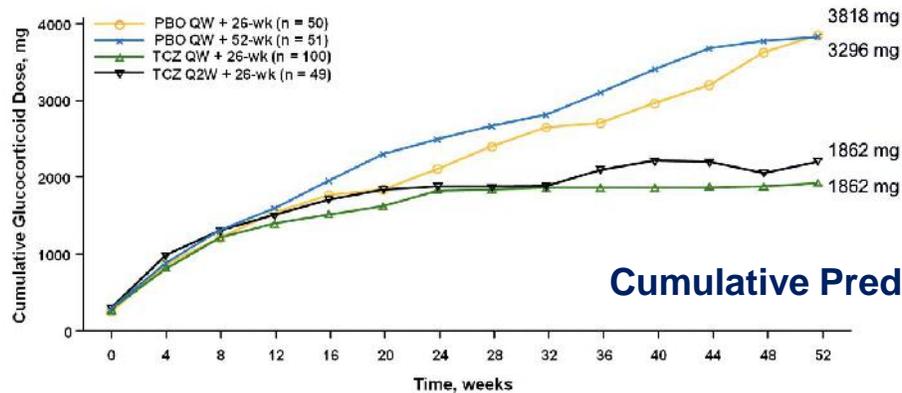
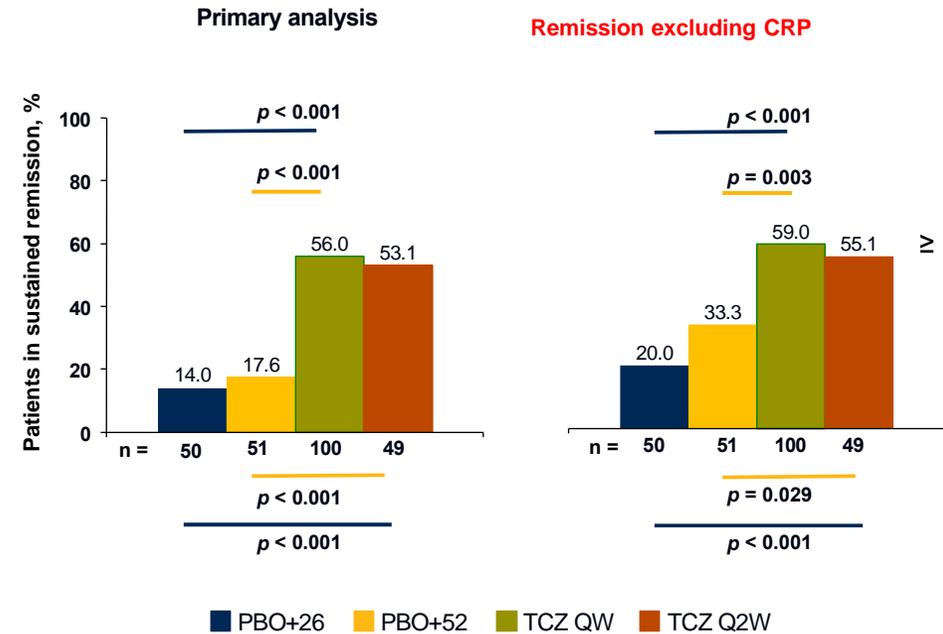
Tocilizumab (TCZ) - GiACTA study

STUDY DESIGN

251 GCA patients randomized (2:1:1:1)

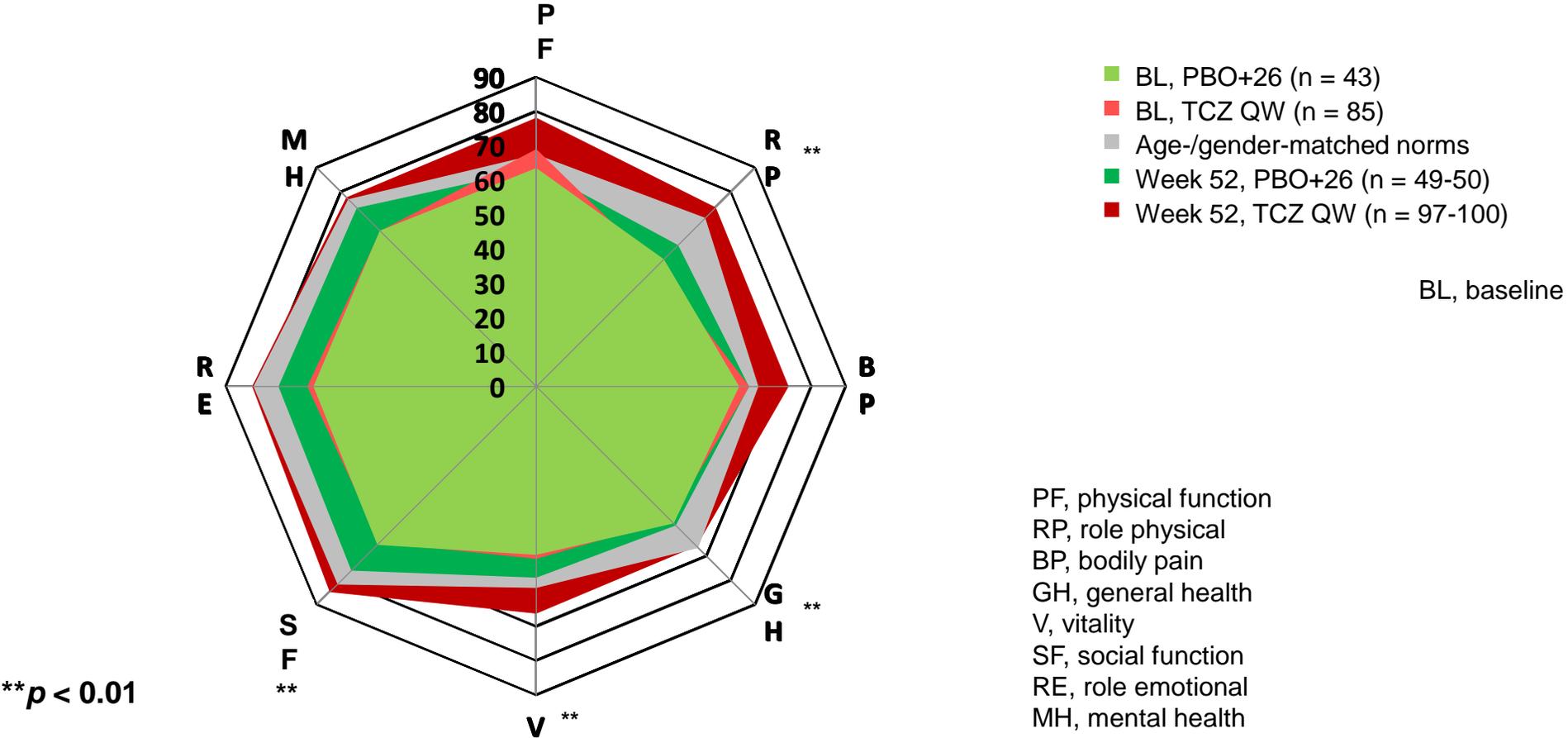


RESULTS - Sustained Remission



Health-related quality of life in GCA patients treated with TCZ

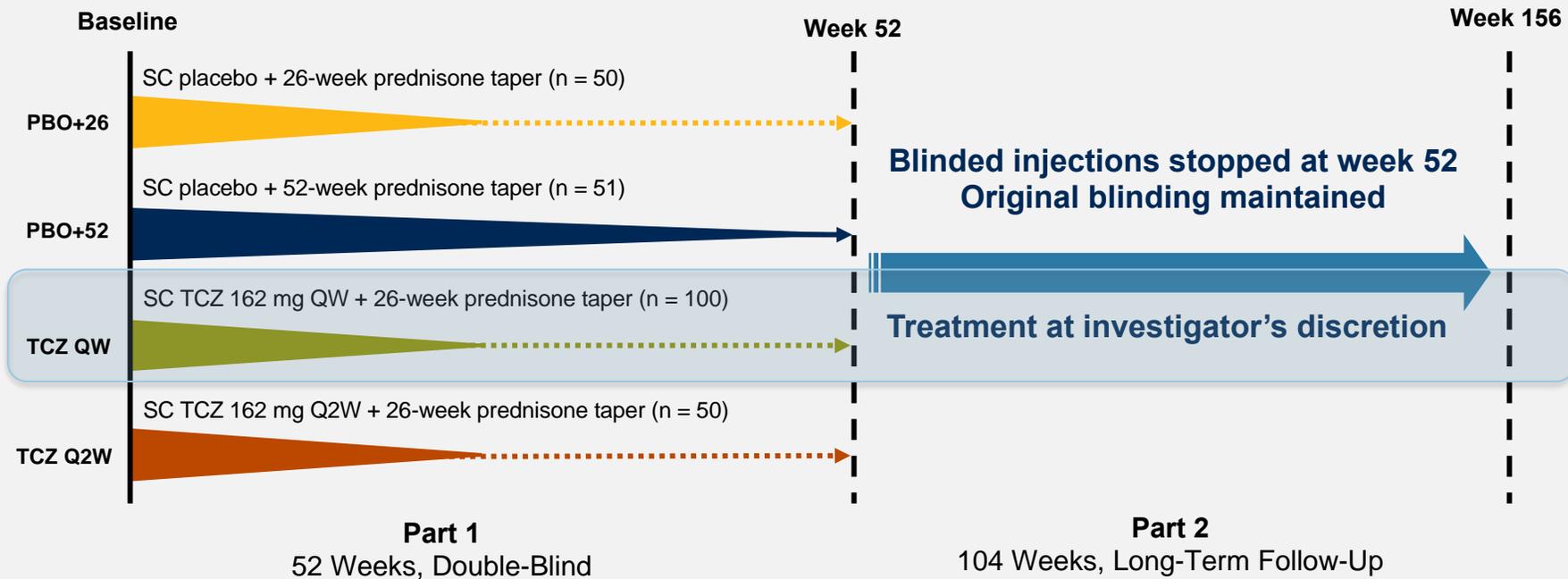
Short form (SF)-36 domain scores: TCZ QW vs PBO+26-week prednisone vs age-/gender-matched controls



Durability of response to TCZ

Stone et al. Lancet Rheum 2021

Post hoc analysis of part 2 of the GiACTA trial



QW, every week; Q2W, every 2 weeks; SC, subcutaneous; TCZ, tocilizumab.

Weekly TCZ arm

85 patients entered Part 2, 81 were in clinical remission, and 59 were off treatment

- 25/59 (42%) maintained the treatment-free clinical remission for 2 years during Part 2



Aconcagua
Mendoza, Argentina

GCA TREATMENT
- Recent advances -

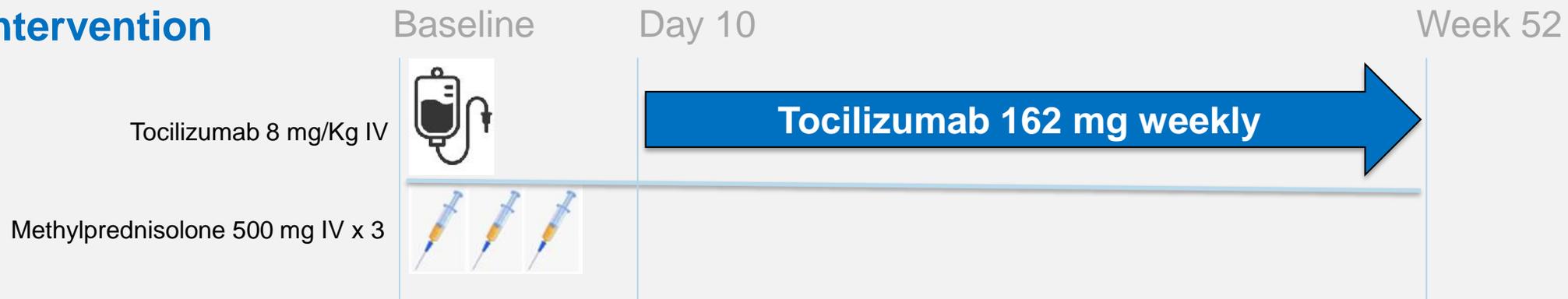
Is less than 6 months of prednisone possible in GCA?

TCZ plus ultra-short steroid course (GUSTO study)

DESIGN

- Prospective, single center, open-label trial of TCZ plus MP pulses for new-onset GCA pts with active disease

Intervention



Endpoints

- **Primary endpoint:** Remission by day 31 maintained through week 24
- **Secondary endpoint:** Relapse-free remission at week 52

Results

- 3/12 (25%)
- 13/18 (72%)

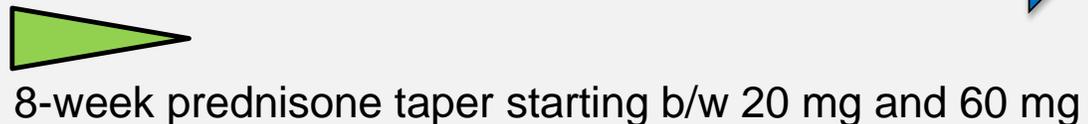
Is less than 6 months of prednisone possible in GCA?

TCZ plus 8 weeks of prednisone for GCA

DESIGN

- Prospective, single center, open-label trial of TCZ plus 8 weeks of prednisone for new onset / relapsing GCA patients with active disease

Intervention



Primary endpoint

- Prednisone-free remission at week 52

RESULTS

	GCA patients (n = 30)
Efficacy	
Sustained, prednisone-free remission by week 52	23.0 (76.7)
Cumulative prednisone dose (mg) at week 52, mean (SD)	1051.5 (390.3)
Relapse	
Time to relapse, weeks: mean (SD)	15.8 (14.7)
Prednisone dose (mg/day) at relapse, mean (SD)	2.1 (5.2)
Cumulative prednisone dose (mg), mean (SD)	1883.1 (699.2)

Pathophysiology and potential treatment targets

Agents under investigation

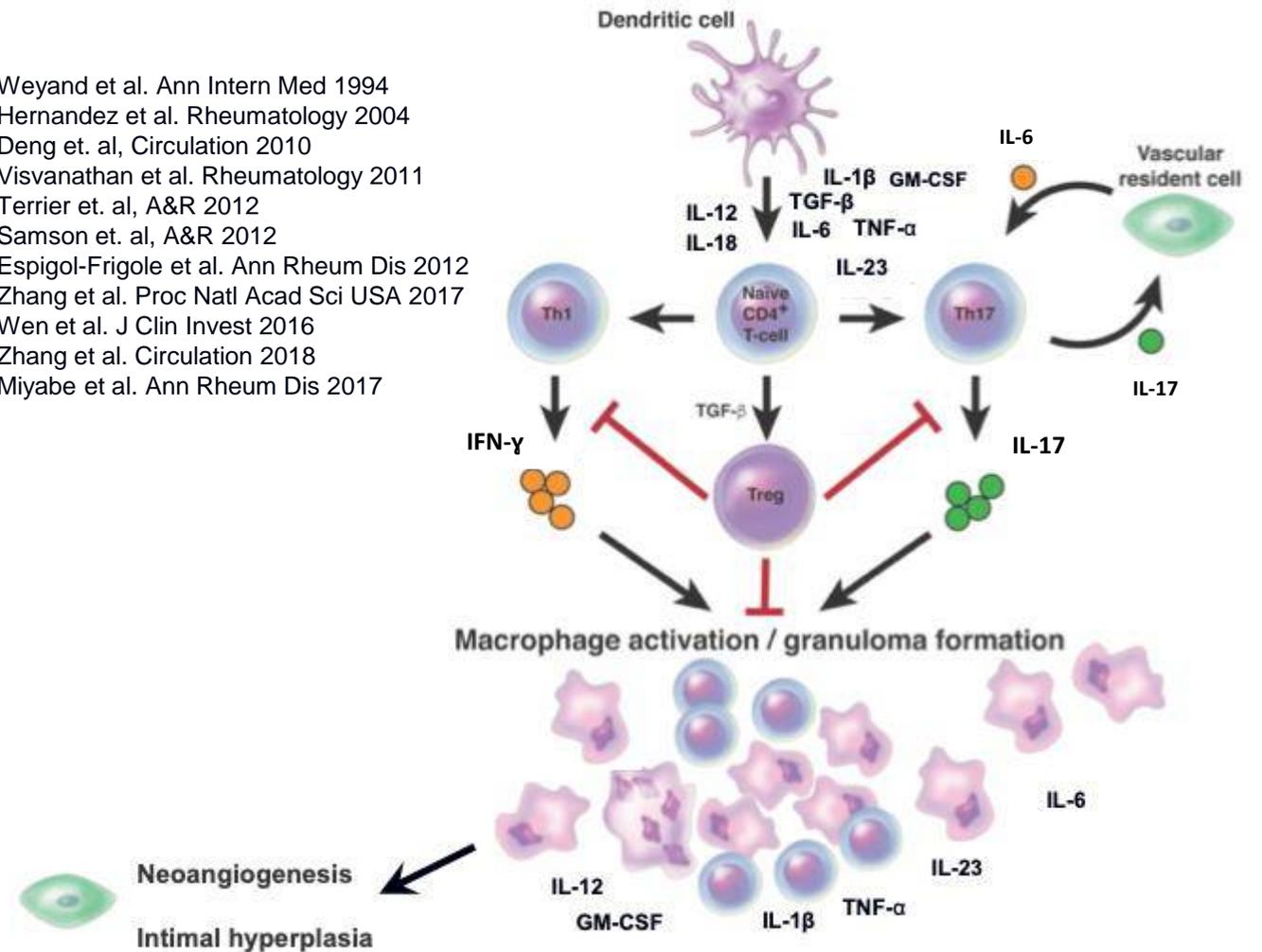
- Results available

- **Ustekinumab** (IL-12/23 p40) – Uncontrolled
- **Abatacept** (CD4⁺ T-cell co-stimulation) - Phase 2 RCT
- **Mavrilimumab** (GM-CSF) - Phase 2 RCT
- **Secukinumab** (IL-17) - Phase 2 RCT
- **Baricitinib** (JAK/STAT) – Uncontrolled
- **Sirukumab** (IL-6) - Phase 3 RCT terminated

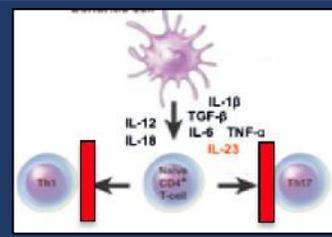
- No results available yet

- **Upadacitinib** (JAK/STAT) - Phase 3 RCT
- **Secukinumab** (IL-17) - Phase 3 RCT
- **Guselkumab** (IL-23 p19) - Phase 2 RCT

Weyand et al. Ann Intern Med 1994
Hernandez et al. Rheumatology 2004
Deng et al. Circulation 2010
Visvanathan et al. Rheumatology 2011
Terrier et al. A&R 2012
Samson et al. A&R 2012
Espigol-Frigole et al. Ann Rheum Dis 2012
Zhang et al. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA 2017
Wen et al. J Clin Invest 2016
Zhang et al. Circulation 2018
Miyabe et al. Ann Rheum Dis 2017

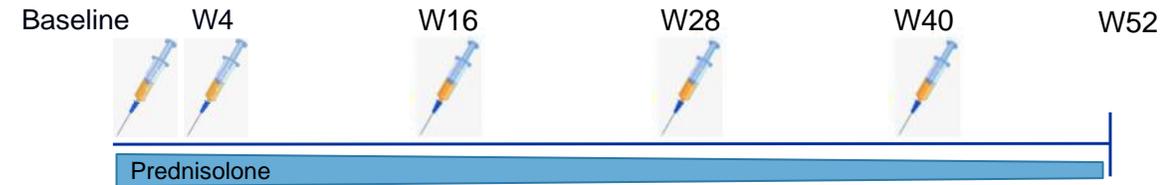


Ustekinumab for GCA



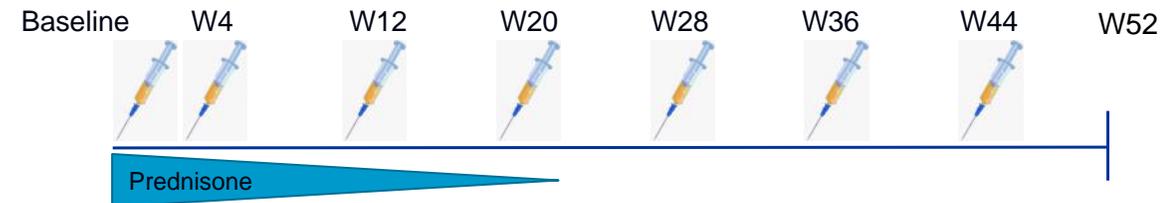
Irish study, Conway et al.

- UST 90 mg SQ at week 0, week 4, and Q3 months
- **No relapses seen over 52 weeks**
- Prednisolone discontinuation not required
- 75% of patients were still on prednisone (median dose 5 mg/day) by week 52

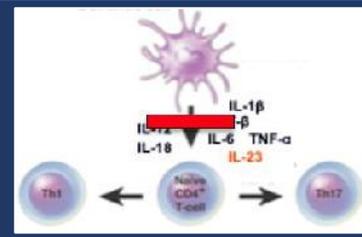


MGH study, Matza et al.

- UST 90 mg SQ at week 0, week 4, and Q2 months
- **>50% of the patients relapsed over 52 weeks**
- Prednisone taper over 6 months per protocol



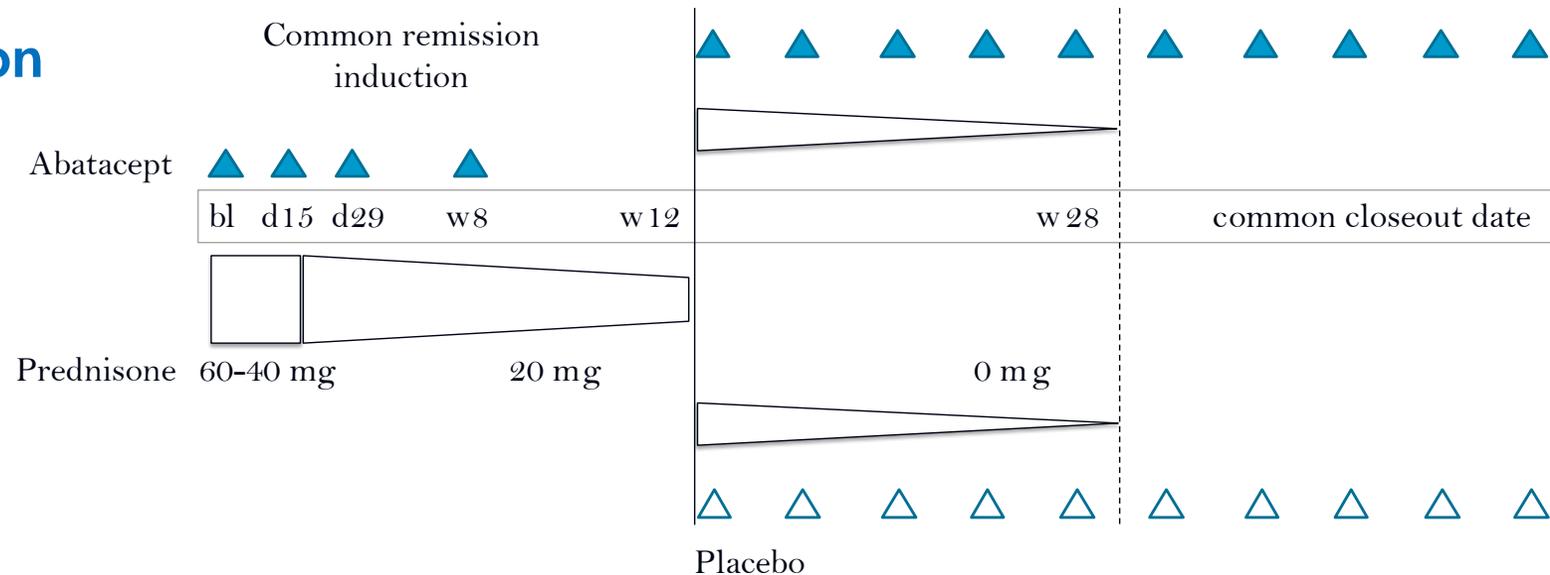
Abatacept for GCA



DESIGN

- Phase II, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial – withdrawal randomization

Intervention



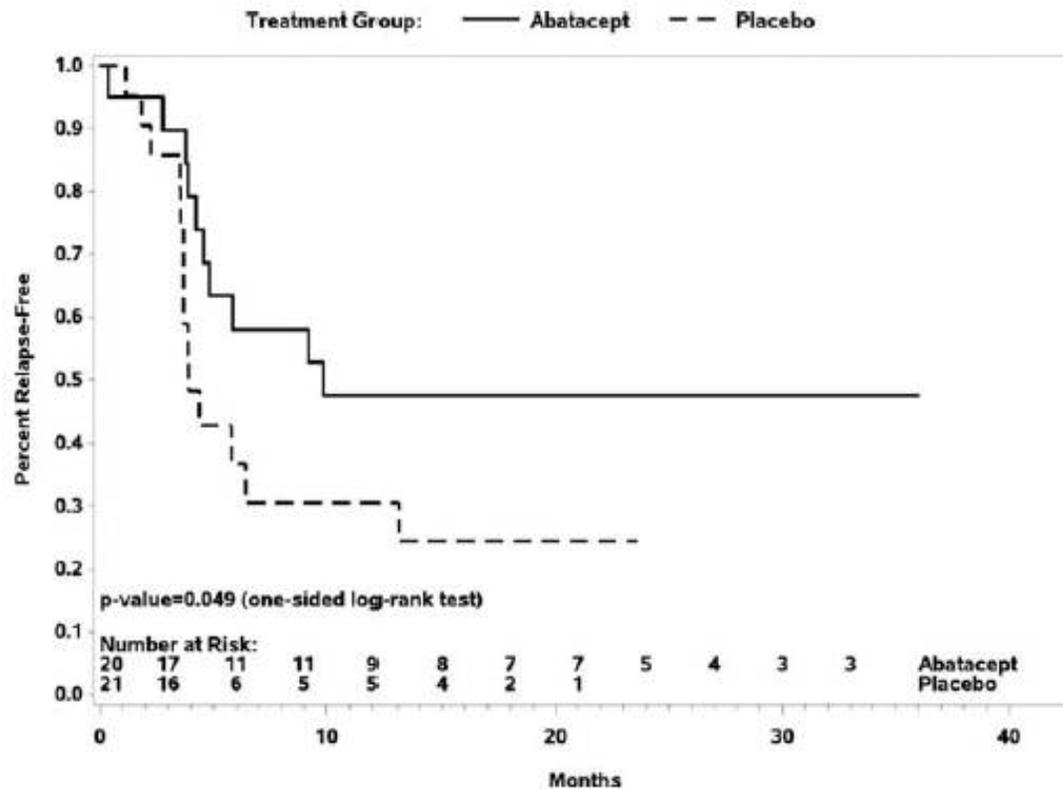
Primary endpoint

- Relapse-free survival (duration of remission)

Abatacept for GCA

RESULTS

- Efficacy



Relapse-free survival at 12 months

Abatacept 48%, Placebo 31% (P = 0.049)

Median duration of remission

Abatacept 9.9 months, Placebo 3.9 months (P = 0.023)

GM-CSF biology

GM-CSF

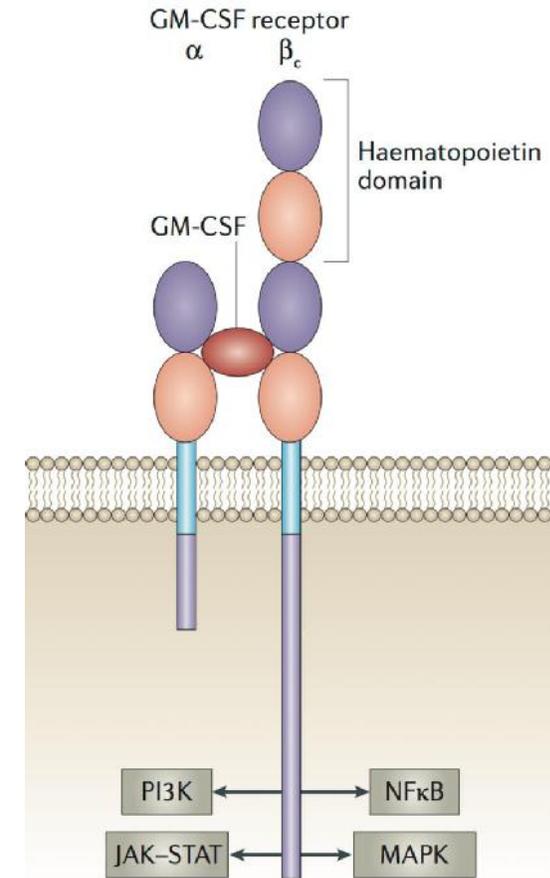
- Colony-stimulating factor (CSF) family of hematopoietic growth factors

Sources

- B and T cells
- Dendritic cells (DC)
- NK cells
- Myeloid cells (monocytes/macrophages, neutrophils)
- Tissue resident cells (endothelium, fibroblasts, VSMCs)

Functions

- Bone marrow stimulation of the myeloid lineage
- DC maturation and differentiation
- Macrophage activation and function
- Myeloid-cell trafficking
- Angiogenesis
- Neutrophil priming, activation and function
- B cell IgM production
- Nociception



GM-CSF in GCA

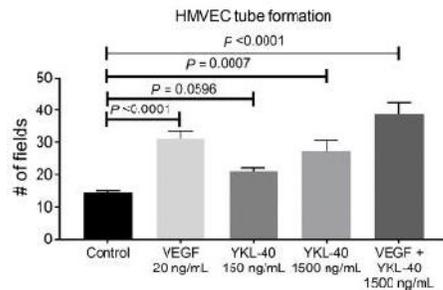
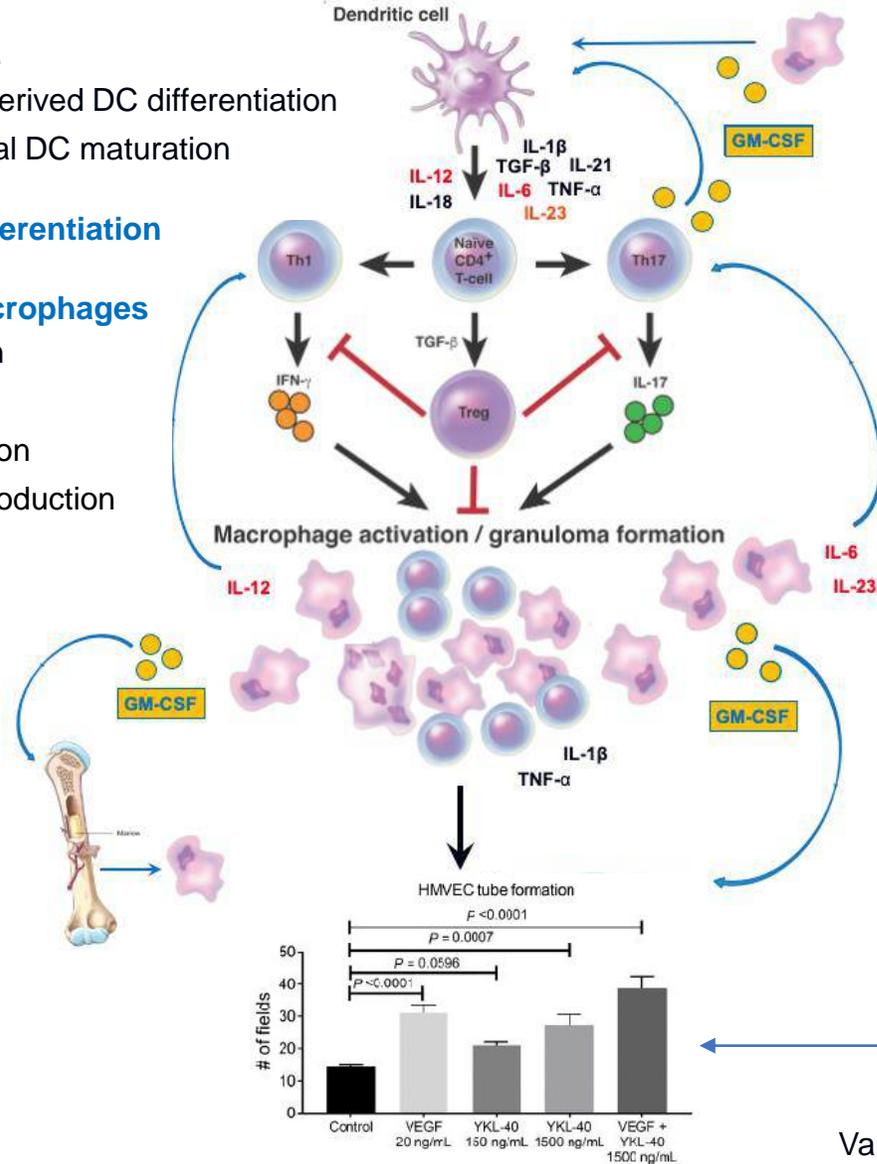
Dendritic cells

- Monocyte-derived DC differentiation
- Conventional DC maturation

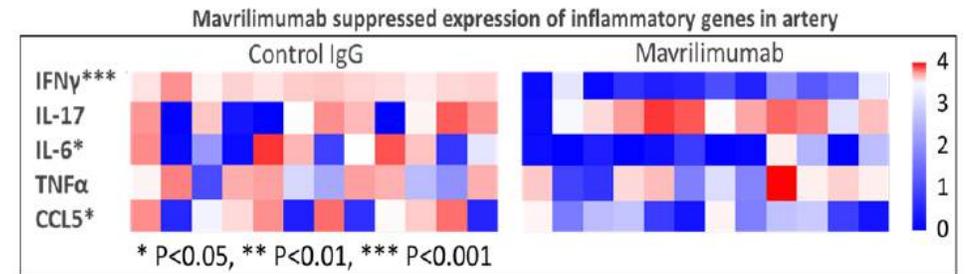
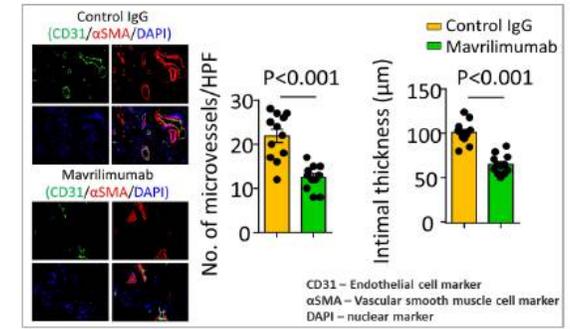
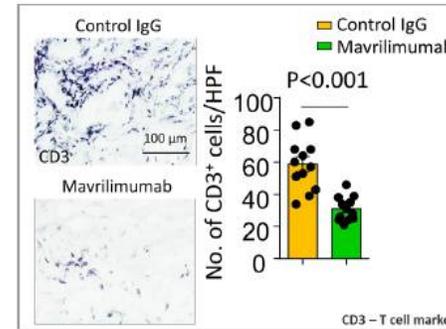
CD4 T-cell differentiation

Monocyte/Macrophages

- Proliferation
- Survival
- Differentiation
- Cytokine production
- Trafficking

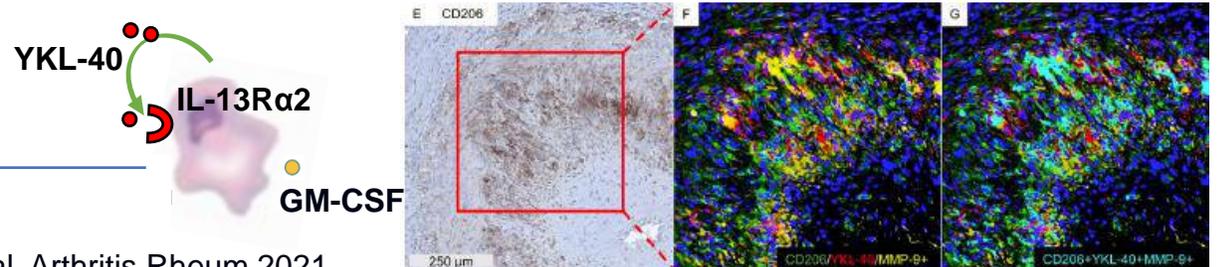


GM-CSF is pathogenic in a translational model of vasculitis



Watanabe et al. ACR 2019

GM-CSF induces expression of YKL-40 and MMP-9 in macrophages

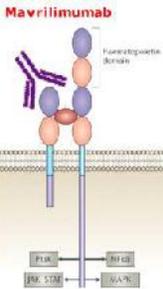
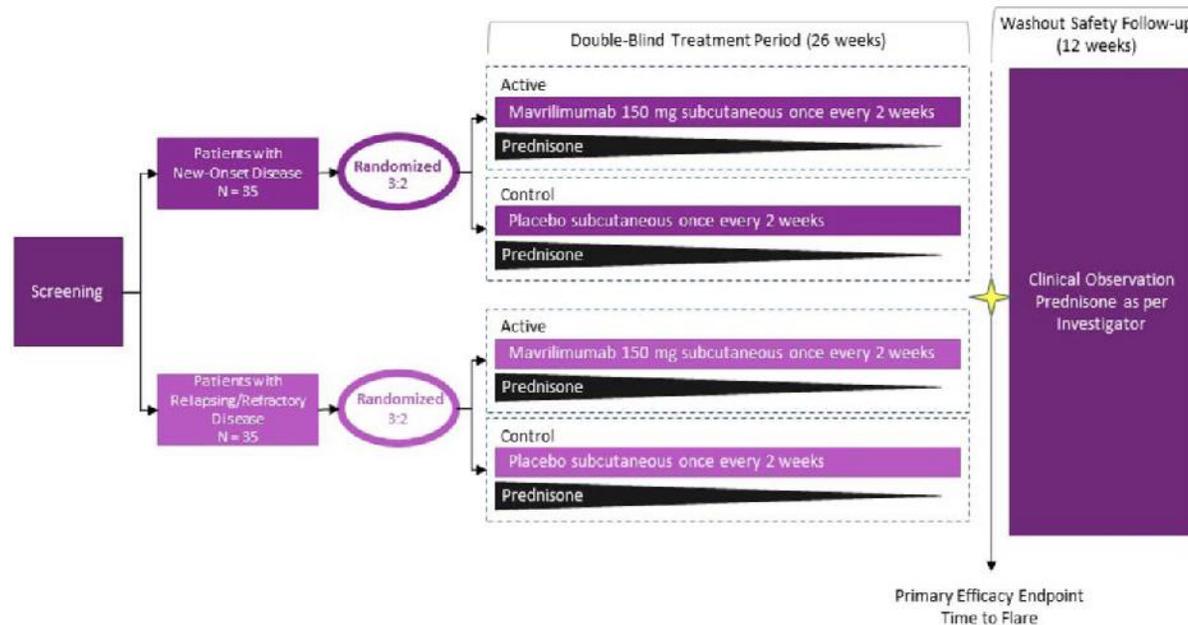


Van Sleen et al. Arthritis Rheum 2021

Phase 2 trial of Mavrilimumab for GCA

DESIGN

- Phase II, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial



Study Population

- Positive temporal artery biopsy or vascular imaging
- Active disease within 6 weeks of randomization
- Glucocorticoid-induced remission by day 0

- Primary endpoint:** Time to adjudicated flare within 26 weeks

Definition: ESR or CRP elevation plus clinical cranial or extra-cranial manifestations or new/worsening vasculitis captured by imaging

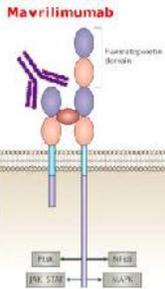
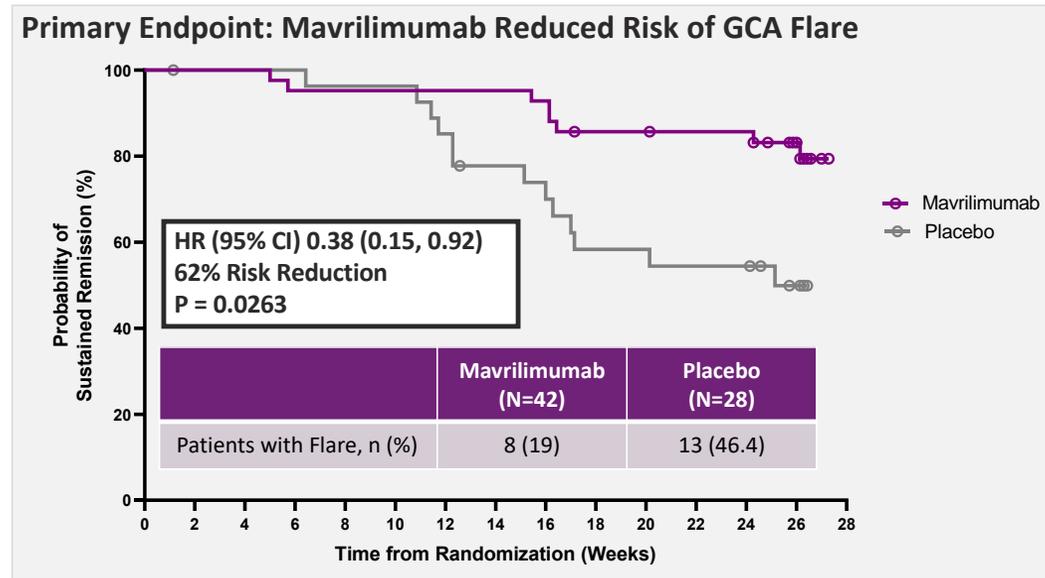
- Key secondary endpoint:** Sustained Remission at week 26

Definition: absence of flare from baseline through week 26

Phase 2 trial of Mavrilimumab for GCA

RESULTS

- Efficacy



Phase 2 trial of Mavrilimumab for GCA

RESULTS

- **Safety**

Table 4 Treatment-emergent adverse events		
Adverse events	Mavrilimumab* (N=42)	Placebo (N=28)
Patients with ≥1 adverse event	33 (78.6%)	25 (89.3%)
Serious adverse event	2 (4.8%)	3 (10.7%)
Serious adverse event related to study drug	0	0
Adverse event resulting in death	0	0
Adverse event leading to study drug discontinuation	1 (2.4%)	1 (3.6%)
Adverse events by maximum severity†		
Mild	18 (42.9%)	13 (46.4%)
Moderate	14 (33.3%)	11 (39.3%)
Severe	1 (2.4%)	1 (3.6%)

Most common adverse events‡		
Headache	6 (14.3%)	7 (25.0%)
Nasopharyngitis	5 (11.9%)	3 (10.7%)
Neck pain	4 (9.5%)	2 (7.1%)
Arthralgia	2 (4.8%)	4 (14.3%)
Hypertension	1 (2.4%)	4 (14.3%)
Back pain	3 (7.1%)	3 (10.7%)
Muscle spasms	3 (7.1%)	3 (10.7%)
Upper respiratory tract infection	3 (7.1%)	2 (7.1%)
Constipation	3 (7.1%)	0
Diarrhoea	0	3 (10.7%)
Fall	2 (4.8%)	5 (17.9%)

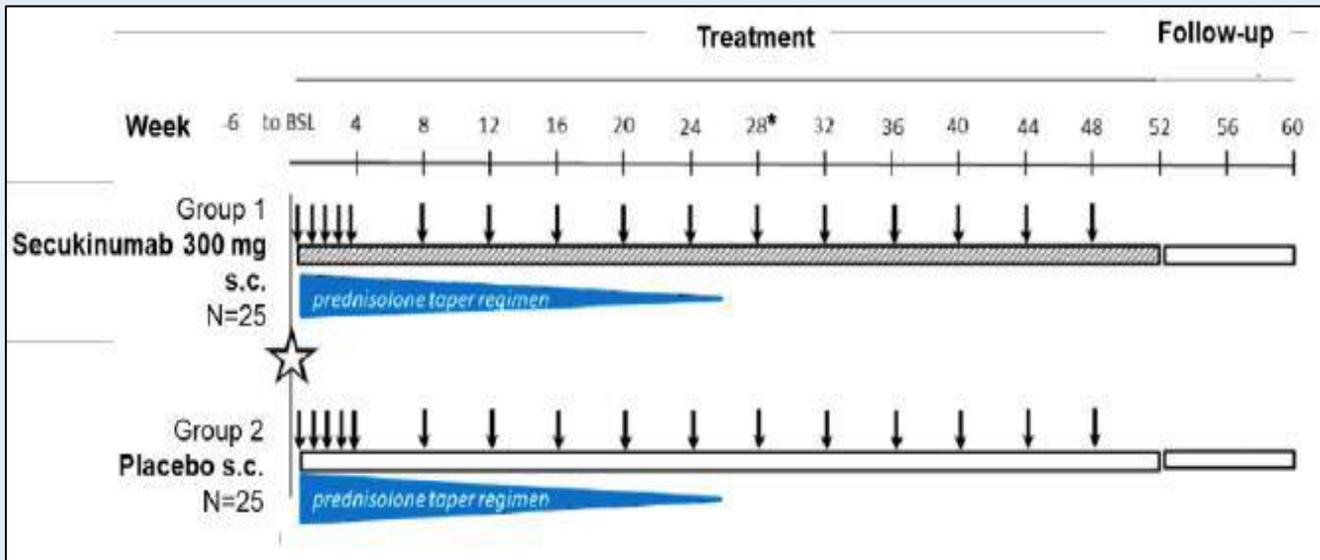
- Rates of AEs were similar across treatment groups
- No drug-related SAEs
- No deaths, alveolar proteinosis or vision loss occurred during the trial

Phase 2 trial of Secukinumab for GCA

DESIGN

- Phase II, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial for patients with new-onset / relapsed GCA (N = 36)

Intervention



Primary endpoint

- Remission at 28 weeks

Secondary endpoints

- Remission at 52 weeks
- Time to flare
- Cumulative prednisone dose at 52 weeks
- Safety

Experimental arm

Secukinumab (SEC) + 28 weeks of prednisone

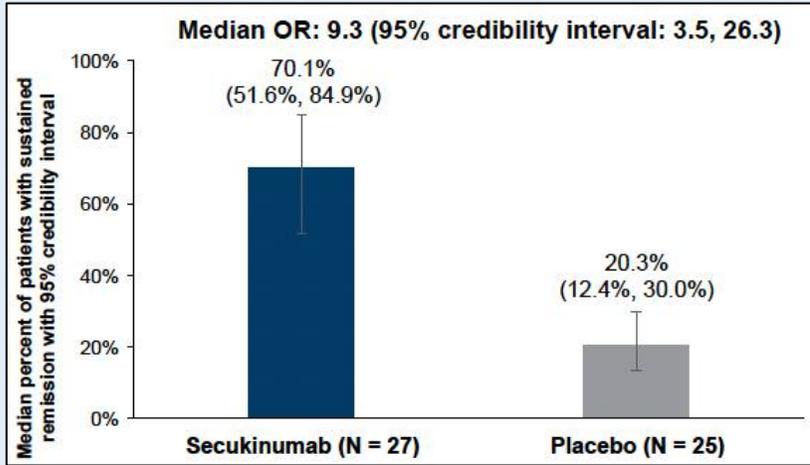
Control arm

Placebo (PBO) + 28 weeks of prednisone

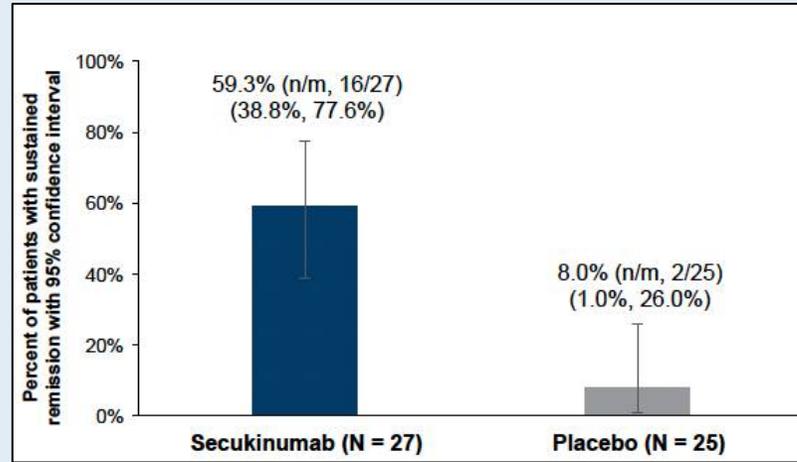
Results

- 27 patients received SEC and 25 patients received PBO

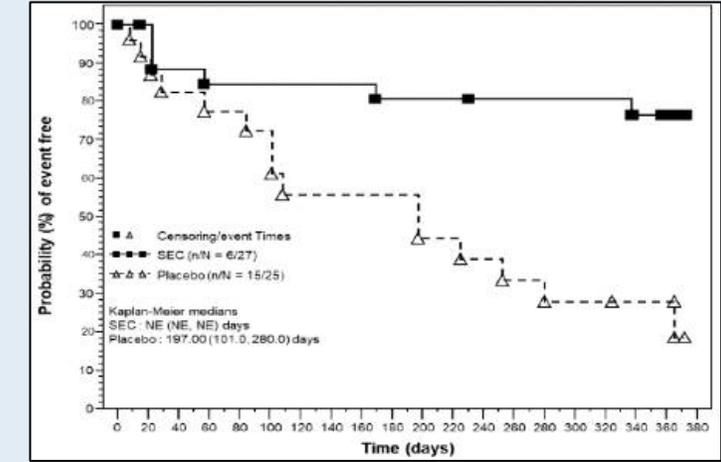
Primary endpoint (SR at 28 weeks)



SR at 52 weeks



Time to flare



Prednisone use

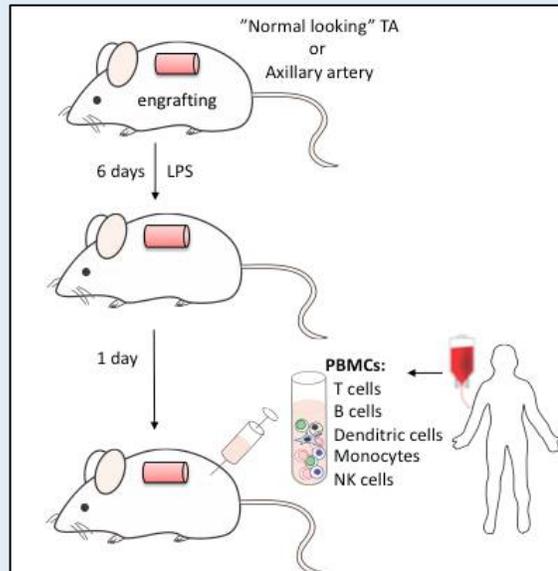
Time period	Secukinumab (N = 27)	Placebo (N = 25)
Baseline to Week 28 (mg), mean (SD)	2689.70 (935.860)	2693.74 (1241.907)
Baseline to Week 52 (mg), mean (SD)	2841.26 (1116.192)	3375.58 (1720.978)

JAK/STAT inhibition in GCA

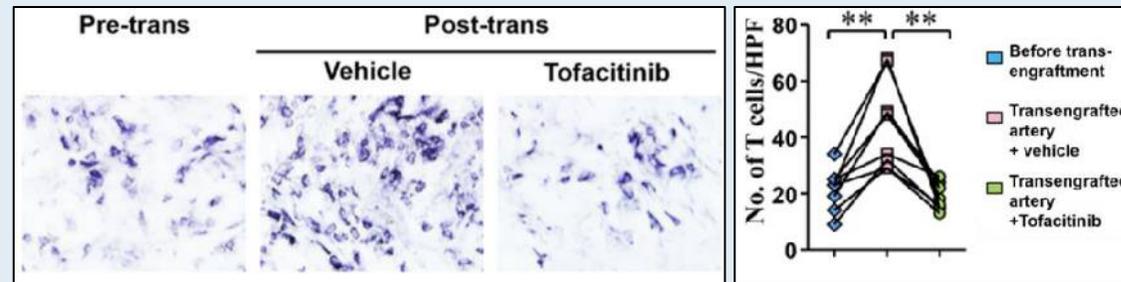
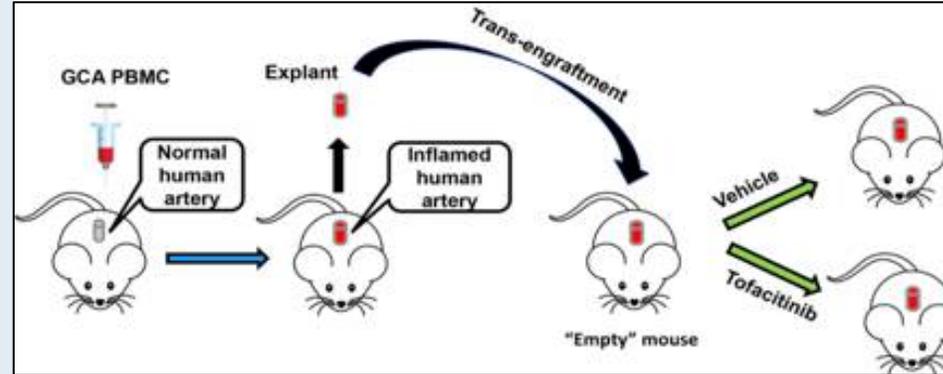
Circulation

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Inhibition of JAK-STAT Signaling Suppresses Pathogenic Immune Responses in Medium and Large Vessel Vasculitis



Human Artery–Severe Combined Immunodeficiency Mouse Chimeras



POSTER SESSION C

1396. Baricitinib in Relapsing Giant Cell Arteritis: A Prospective Open-Label Single-Institution Study

 Matthew Koster, MD
Mayo Clinic
Dr.

N = 15

- 1 patient withdrawn
- 1 patients relapsed
- 13 patients maintained remission through week 52
- 1 patient had a SAE (thrombocytopenia)
- No MACE, malignancy or VTE

Pathophysiology and potential treatment targets

Agents under investigation

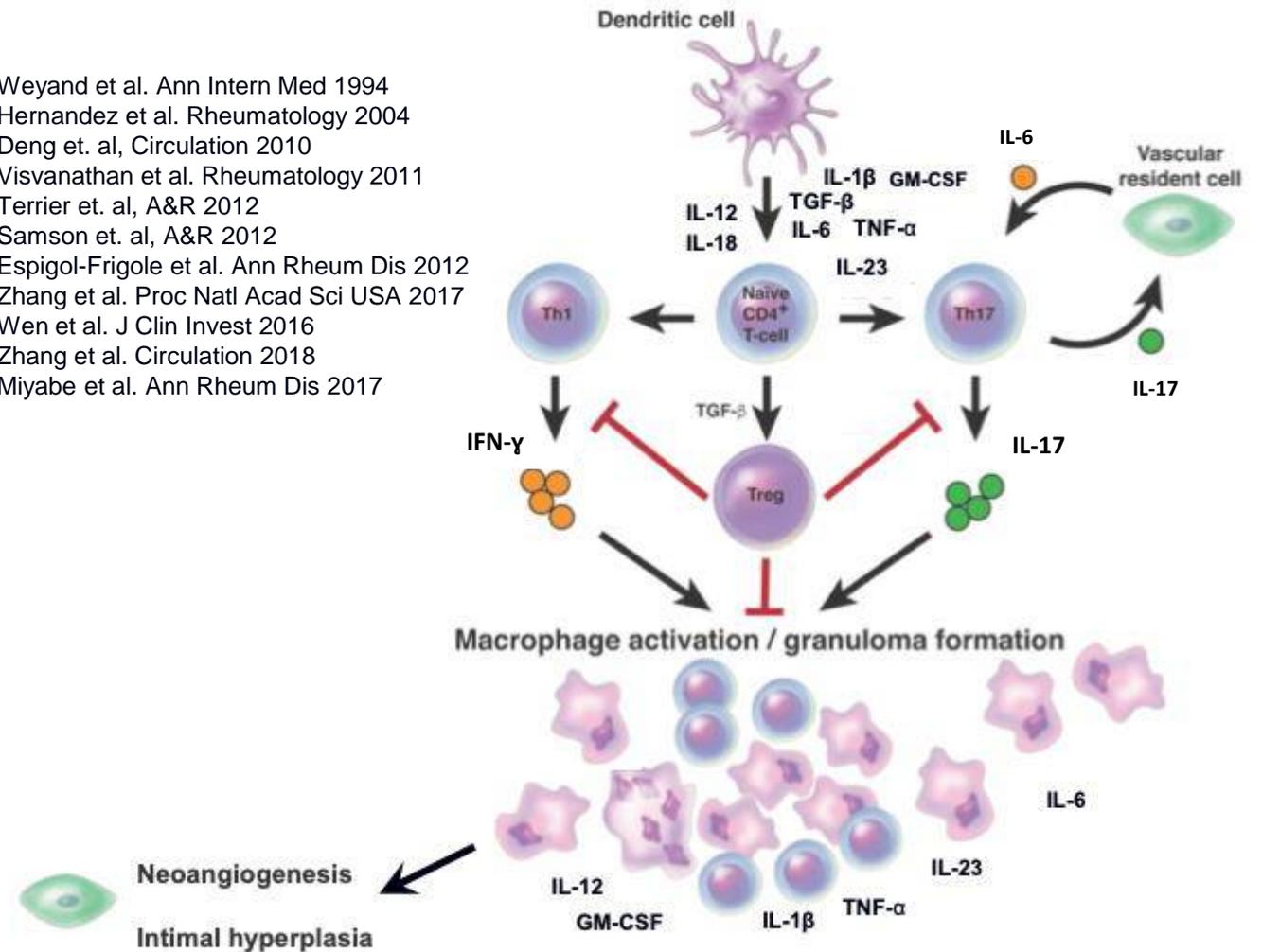
- Results available

- **Ustekinumab** (IL-12/23 p40) – Uncontrolled
- **Abatacept** (CD4⁺ T-cell co-stimulation) - Phase 2 RCT
- **Mavrimumab** (GM-CSF) - Phase 2 RCT
- **Secukinumab** (IL-17) - Phase 2 RCT
- **Baricitinib** (JAK/STAT) – Uncontrolled
- **Sirukumab** (IL-6) - Phase 3 RCT terminated

- No results available yet

- **Upadacitinib** (JAK/STAT) - Phase 3 RCT
- **Secukinumab** (IL-17) - Phase 3 RCT
- **Guselkumab** (IL-23 p19) - Phase 2 RCT

Weyand et al. Ann Intern Med 1994
Hernandez et al. Rheumatology 2004
Deng et al. Circulation 2010
Visvanathan et al. Rheumatology 2011
Terrier et al. A&R 2012
Samson et al. A&R 2012
Espigol-Frigole et al. Ann Rheum Dis 2012
Zhang et al. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA 2017
Wen et al. J Clin Invest 2016
Zhang et al. Circulation 2018
Miyabe et al. Ann Rheum Dis 2017



GCA Guidelines - ACR/VF

2021 ACR / Vasculitis Foundation

- **New-onset disease:** Glucocorticoids plus tocilizumab
- **Relapse on moderate to high dose glucocorticoids:** Add tocilizumab
- **Relapse with cranial or ischemic symptoms:** Add tocilizumab
- **Relapse with PMR symptoms:** No formal recommendations
- **Active large-vessel involvement:** Glucocorticoids plus tocilizumab

Note:

MTX or abatacept are options in case of tocilizumab inefficacy, side-effects or accessibility barriers (e.g., cost)



Glaciar Perito Moreno
Chubut (Patagonia), Argentina

PMR treatment

Treatment Quiz #2 - PMR

A 73 y/o patient with PMR achieves clinical remission with prednisone 15 mg followed by taper. After 6 months of treatment, he now takes 5 mg/day of prednisone and reports renewed PMR symptoms. The erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) and C-reactive protein (CRP) are elevated.

Your diagnosis is GCA relapse

What is your treatment recommendation?

- A. Continue a slow prednisone taper by 1 mg every 4 weeks**
- B. Maintain the prednisone dose at 5 mg/day**
- C. Increase the prednisone dose to 10-15 mg/day**
- D. Increase the prednisone dose to 10-15 mg/day and add methotrexate**
- E. Increase the prednisone dose to 10-15 mg/day and add tocilizumab**

PMR treatment - Glucocorticoids

- Initial dose is typically 15 mg/day
- No standardized tapering regimen
- Tapers over > 12 months



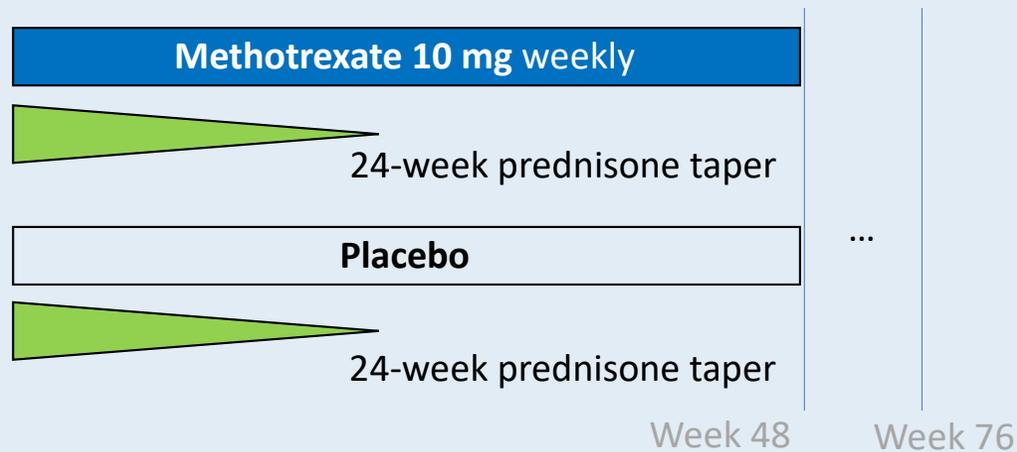
- >60% of patients relapse upon tapering the glucocorticoids
- Biomarkers to assess disease activity have limitations
- Dose modification based on clinical disease activity
- Glucocorticoid-related toxicity in 65%

Methotrexate for PMR

DESIGN

- Phase II, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial for patients with new-onset PMR (N = 72)

Intervention

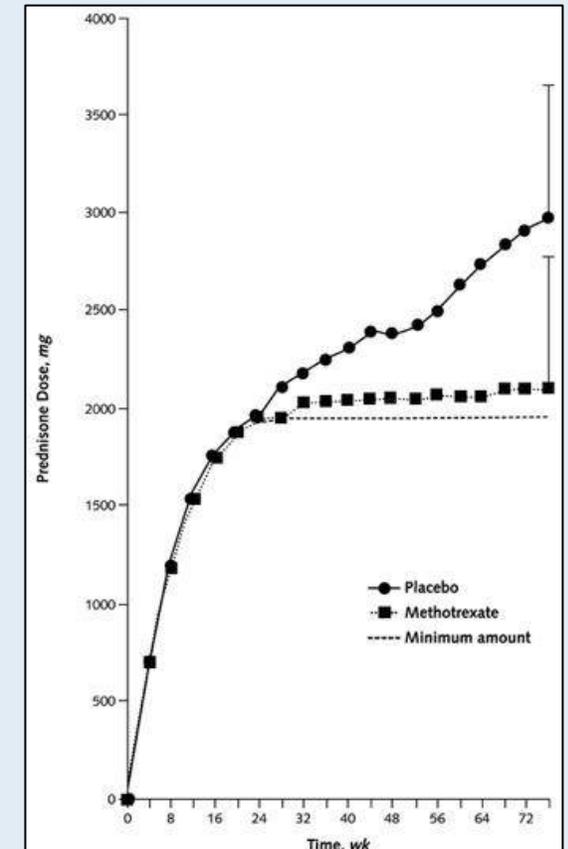


Endpoint

- Proportion of patients off prednisone at week 76
- Relapse
- Cumulative prednisone dose at week 76

Results

- 87.5% versus 53.3%
- 47% versus 73%
- ~2.1 gr versus ~3 gr

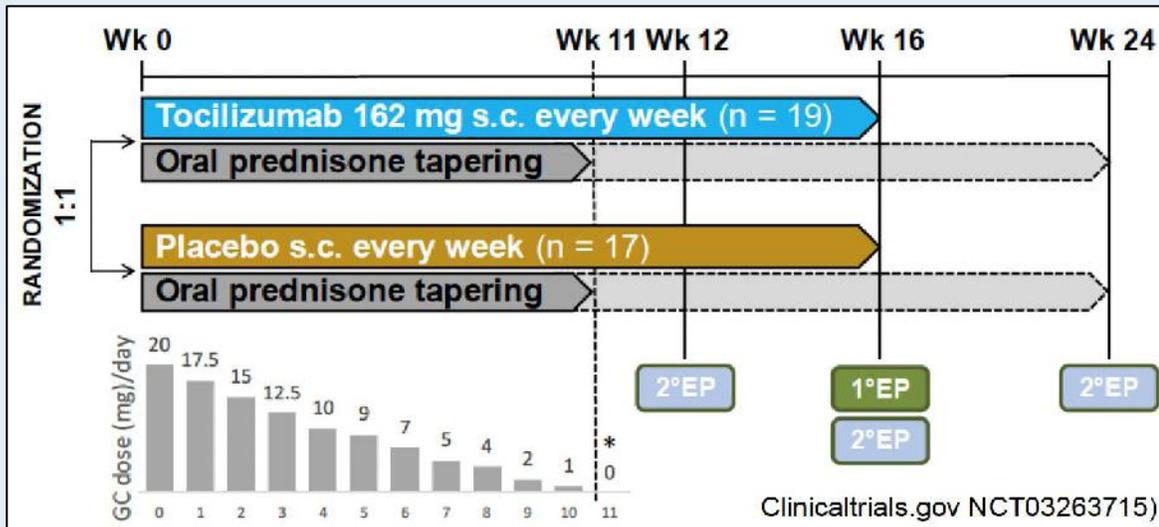


Tocilizumab for PMR

DESIGN

- Phase II/III, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial for patients with new-onset PMR (N = 36)

Intervention



Experimental arm

Tocilizumab (TCZ) + 11 weeks of prednisone

Control arm

Placebo (PBO) + 11 weeks of prednisone

Primary endpoint

- Glucocorticoid (GC)-free remission at 16 weeks

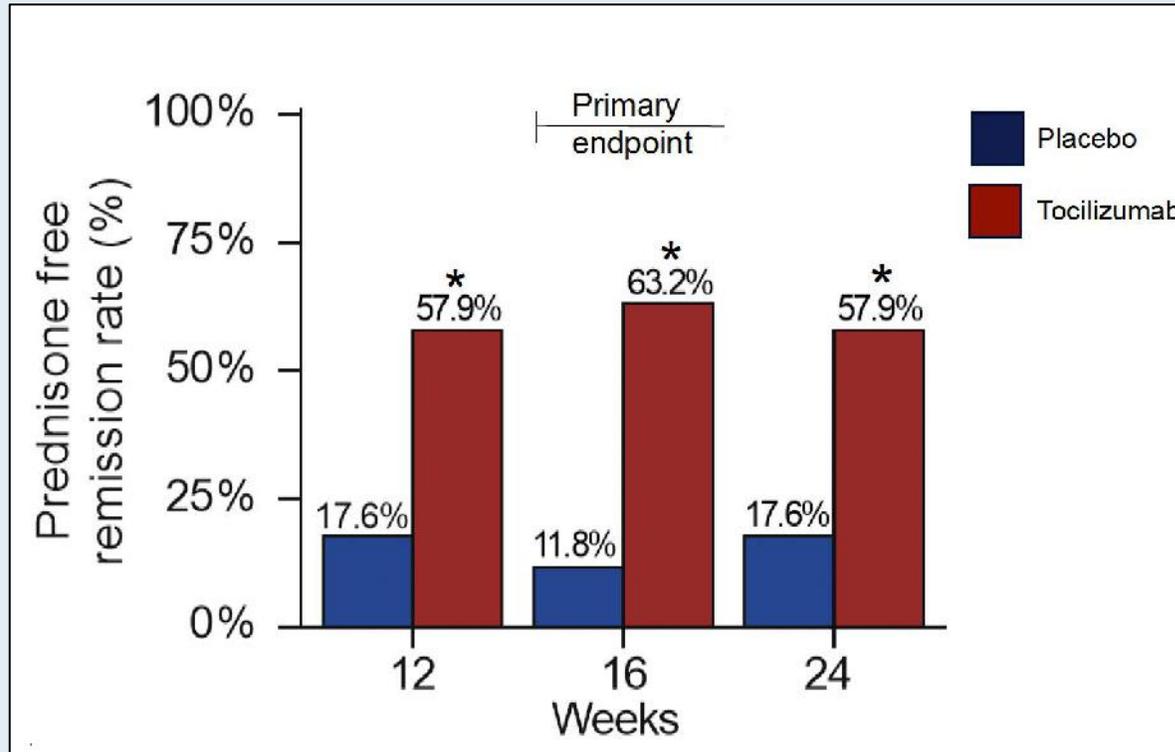
Secondary endpoints

- GC-free remission at 12 and 24 weeks
- Time to flare
- Cumulative prednisone dose at 16 and 24 weeks

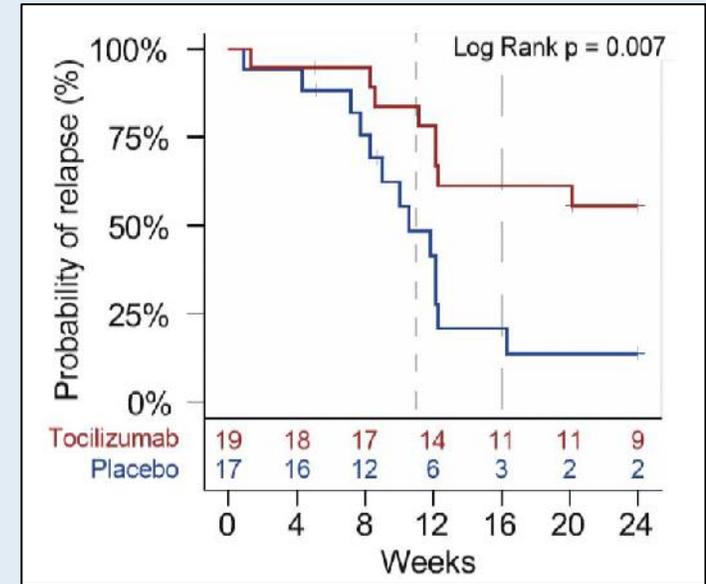
Results

- 19 patients received TCZ and 17 patients received PBO
- Balanced baseline characteristics

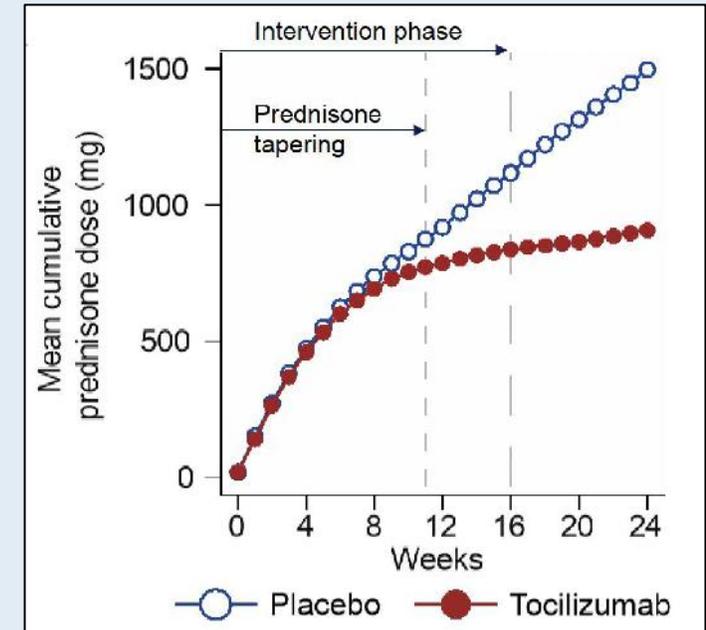
Glucocorticoid-free remission at 12, 16 and 24 weeks

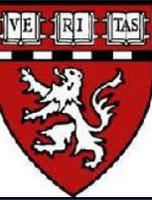


Time to flare



Prednisone use





Thank you

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