FOLLOWING THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF RHEUMATOLOGY QUALITY GUIDELINES CAN ENHANCE THE SAFETY OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS PATIENTS TREATED WITH DISEASE MODIFYING DRUGS

Author: Delfina Bur

Co-Author: Humeira Badsha, MD

INTRODUCTION

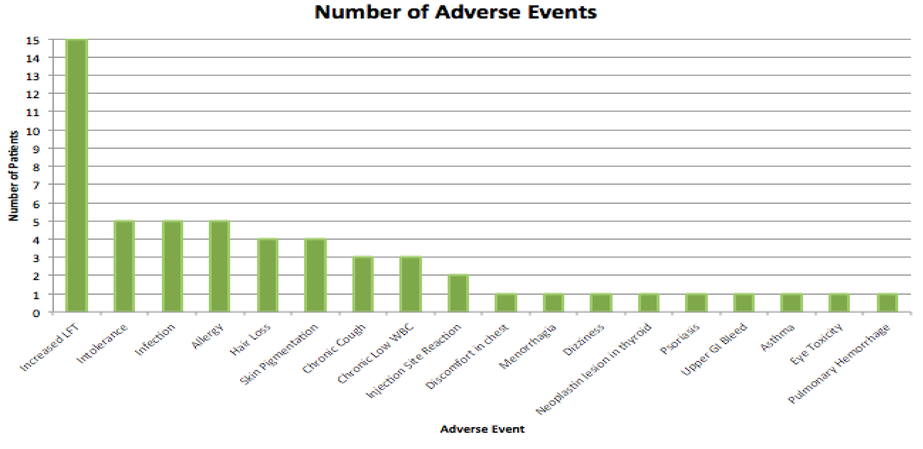
Adverse events (AEs) and serious adverse events (SAEs) from disease modifying drugs (DMARDs) for Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) can result in significant morbidity and even fatality. The American College of Rheumatology (ACR) has published drug safety disease modifying drug (DMARD) guidelines for doctors to follow so that they can monitor side effects.

METHODS

We collected data on DMARD and biologic usage of 250 RA patients in a Musculoskeletal clinic in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and audited the practice to see how many of the ACR drug safety guidelines were being followed. Subsequently we analyzed how many patients suffered from AEs and SAEs (death, initial or prolonged hospitalization, persistent or significant disability, cardiac failure, or myocardial infarction). Outcomes of the AEs and SAEs were recorded.

RESULTS

Figure 1. Number of Adverse Events.



CONCLUSIONS

Of the 250 patients administered with 518 drugs, 39 (15.6%) reported AEs of which 1.8% of them were deemed SAEs and 29 patients (74.4%) discontinued the DMARD. All adverse events were resolved with drug discontinuation and no patients had irreversible side effects. We believe that adherence to the ACR DMARD safety guidelines for RA treatment can limit the impact of AEs and SAEs and enhance the safety of patients.

OBJECTIVES

The aim of our study was to audit our practice to see if the ACR guidelines were followed and what impact that had on RA patients with AEs and SAEs.

ACR GUIDELINES

1. Informing patients about risk
2. Prophylaxis for patients at risk for gastrointestinal bleeding
3. Hemoglobin tests
4. Serum creatinine tests
5. Baseline studies
6. Drug toxicity monitoring

Figure 2. Ethnicities Represented.

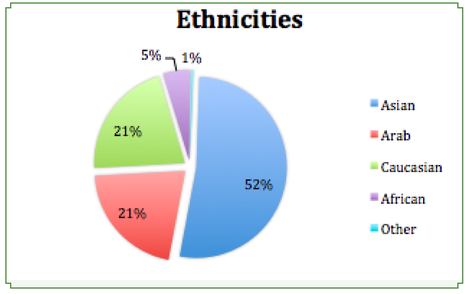
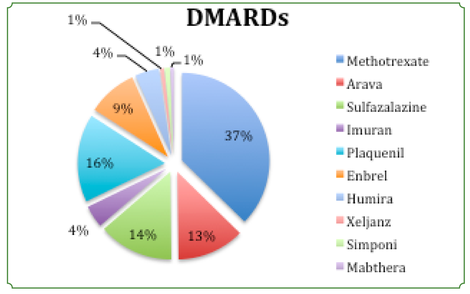


Figure 3. DMARDs prescribed to 250 patients.



KEY POINT

Strict adherence to the ACR drug safety guidelines results in patient safety and effective RA treatment.

Dr. Humeira Badsha Medical Center

UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA