

Prescribing newer biologics as first line of treatment may become more prevalent for patients with psoriasis

Patients who switched to newer IL-17 biologics reported improved outcomes

ORLANDO, Fla. – Sept. 25, 2018 – A recent study found patients experienced better outcomes after switching to newer biologic medications to treat psoriasis. The study, led by [AllianceRx Walgreens Prime](#), a central specialty and home delivery pharmacy, in collaboration with the Duquesne University School of Pharmacy and Walgreens, concluded doctors may be comfortable prescribing the newer IL-17 inhibiting biologic medications as a first-line psoriasis treatment.

Psoriasis is a chronic disease characterized by raised, red, scaly patches, or lesions on the skin which are often itchy and painful. A cytokine, or protein, called IL-17 targets healthy cells and causes inflammation. People with psoriasis lesions have more IL-17 than those without lesions. Studies show that inhibiting IL-17 can help clear psoriasis. When patients do not respond to traditional oral or topical therapies, they are typically prescribed biologic medications. Newer biologic medications, such as secukinumab (Cosentyx®) or ixekizumab (Taltz®), focus on inhibiting IL-17.

For the study, researchers analyzed the records of 5,547 patients with psoriasis who were prescribed either secukinumab or ixekizumab for the FDA-approved indication of psoriasis from 2016 to 2018. Data included patient pharmacy fills from AllianceRx Walgreens Prime and patient-reported reasons for switching biologics. The most common patient-reported reason for switching therapies was ineffectiveness of the prior therapy. Forty percent of the patients completing at least two assessments reported experiencing better outcomes after switching to an IL-17 inhibitor. This indicates there may be a place in therapy for the use of IL-17 biologics after patients have found other psoriasis biologics to be ineffective.

“With the recent advancements in psoriasis treatment, little information is available about the real-world utilization of newer biologic agents approved to treat this incurable, chronic disease,” said Rick Miller, vice president of clinical services, professional practice and accreditation for AllianceRx Walgreens Prime and co-author of the study. “The intent of the study was to add to the limited body of knowledge on both the prescribing and utilization patterns of these newer medications. If we can use these results to get patients the right treatment sooner, that means improving their quality of care.”

The team of co-authored researchers will present these findings at the National Association of Specialty Pharmacists (NASP) Sixth Annual Meeting and Educational Conference, Sept. 25, 2018, in Washington, D.C.

About AllianceRx Walgreens Prime

AllianceRx Walgreens Prime (alliancerxwp.com) is a specialty and home delivery pharmacy that strives to provide exceptional care throughout a patient’s treatment journey with the medications they need every day. Formed in 2017 through a collaboration between Walgreens, one of the nation’s largest chain drug stores, and Prime Therapeutics, a leading pharmacy benefit manager, the company offers tools and resources for patients, providers and health plans to deliver the optimal health outcomes. The company is headquartered in Orlando, Fla. and its pharmacies are accredited by several national pharmacy accreditation services.

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