

Editorial

Nordic Experiences of Biological Drugs for Psoriasis in Clinical Practice

This issue of *Forum for Nordic Dermato-Venereology* includes a special session entitled *Current Opinion on Biologics*, with reports by dermatologists from Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Finland on their clinical experiences with this new treatment. Following practical use in dermatology, the biological drugs are starting to find their correct niches. These are different for each biological drug, with preferred drugs for severe and unstable psoriasis, for severe psoriasis with arthropathy, and for safe long-term control of stable psoriasis without arthropathy. We surely need more than one type of biological drug.

Innovative use is reported in atopic dermatitis, Behcet's disease, pyoderma gangraenosum, pityriasis rubra pilaris, vasculitis, dermatomyositis,

sarcoidosis and acrodermatitis continua suppurativa, with favourable reports in cases where other treatments failed. Studies on new indications for biological drugs are still in their infancy. Where other treatments fail in desperately ill patients, a trial and error experiment may be justified and may meet with success or failure depending on the case.

Combination treatment with two biological drugs was reported by Dr Morten Dalaker of Trondheim, who demonstrated a synergistic effect between two drugs, one treating the arthropathy, the other treating the skin.

Biological drugs are, as we all recognize, expensive, and thus there are many barriers limiting their use. Barriers can have local flavour; for example, in Iceland failure of a treatment course at the Blue Lagoon is mentioned along with failure of treatment with methotrexate and cyclosporine, before biological drugs

can be instituted. Because of these barriers, biological drugs are probably under-used at present. However, innovative treatments described in this issue of *Forum for Nordic Dermato-Venereology* illustrate that the hospital system may be open-minded when there is a special challenge and a doctor arguing the case.

During 31 May–4 June, 2006, Stockholm witnessed the birth of the 1st World Psoriasis & Psoriatic Arthritis Conference, organized by the International Federation of Psoriasis Associations, with some 700 participants. A report from this meeting will be included in the August issue of *Forum for Nordic Dermato-Venereology*.



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