Mortality Risk 50% Higher With Severe Psoriasis

BY SHERRY BOSCHERT
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LOS ANGELES — Two studies on psoriasis presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Investigative Dermatology show an association between the disease and increased mortality, and an increased risk for hypertension, heart disease, and diabetes.

In the first study, severe psoriasis was an independent predictor of death, and increased patients’ mortality risk by 50%, compared with normal control patients’ risk, in a cohort study of more than 713,000 patients. No increased risk for death was seen in patients with mild psoriasis, however, compared with controls, Shana Kothb Kurd said at the meeting. Ms. Kurd and her associates derived the 50% greater mortality risk, in a cohort study of more than 713,000 patients, and 4% of the general population. The study was funded in part by Merck Serono S.A., the General Practice Research Database, compiled in the United Kingdom from 1987 to 2002, accounted for 3,951 patients with severe psoriasis, 135,668 patients with mild psoriasis, and up to 5 control patients for each psoriasis patient, seen in the same practices in the same time periods.

The overall incidence of death was 12 deaths per 1,000 patients per 1,000 patient-years in each of three other groups: the mild psoriasis group, the 560,358 controls for the mild psoriasis group, and the 15,073 controls for the severe psoriasis group. In patients with severe psoriasis, however, overall incidence of death was 21 patients per 1,000 patient-years, Ms. Kurd reported.

The relative risk of death was greatest for younger patients with severe psoriasis, and not affected by gender. At age 35 years, patients with severe psoriasis were 2.5 times more likely to die, compared with control patients. By age 95 years, severe psoriasis incurred only a 10% increased relative risk of death. The increased relative risk of death persisted in analyses that excluded patients with concomitant arthropathic arthritis or rheumatologic disease.

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The study was funded in part by Cen tocior Inc., which markets infliximab.

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