

Systemic Immunosuppressive Therapy for Eye Disease (SITE) - 1995



Objective

To compare the occurrence of malignancy in patients with severe ocular inflammatory disease treated with systemic corticosteroids alone or with systemic immunosuppressive drugs with or without systemic corticosteroids

Methods

Design: Single-center retrospective cohort

Sample Size: N = 537

Treatment Groups:

- Corticosteroid alone: 207
- Immunosuppressant initially treated with corticosteroids: 189
- Immunosuppressant only: 141

Outcome Measures:

- Rates of malignancy after initiating drug therapy

Results

Point 1: The rate of malignancy in the immunosuppressant groups was not significantly different from the rate in the corticosteroids alone group (P = 0.35)

- 1 malignancy developed in the corticosteroid alone group (N = 207)
- 2 malignancies developed in the immunosuppressant group previously treated with corticosteroids (N = 189)
- 2 malignancies developed in the immunosuppressant only group (N = 141)

Point 2: Patients in the immunosuppressant groups were older and had more severe systemic disease

- Patients older than 50 years of age: 48% in the immunosuppressant groups; 26% in the corticosteroid group
- Patients with severe systemic disease (e.g., connective tissue or dermatologic): 68% in the immunosuppressant groups; 11% in the corticosteroid group

TLDR: It is unlikely that patients with severe ocular inflammatory disease who are treated with systemic immunosuppressive agents are at an increased risk of malignancy compared to patients treated with systemic corticosteroids alone