

Daily low-dose prednisone in patients with HTLV-1-associated myelopathy: prospective cohort study in a referral center in Brazil

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Background: During the development of human T-cell lymphotropic virus (HTLV-1) associated myelopathy (HAM), the inflammatory phenomenon is very prominent and is a major factor in the outcome of the disease. The use of corticosteroids can modify its natural history and in this study we evaluated the effectiveness of using daily low-dose oral prednisone.

Methods: This was a prospective observational cohort study using data collected by physicians monitoring patients with HAM in the Institute of Infectious Diseases “Emilio Ribas”, the main referral center to patients with infectious diseases in São Paulo. The objective was to determine if daily low-dose oral prednisone would be able to stabilize the progression of HAM. The outcome measure was the change in Osame Motor Disability Score (OMDS).

Results: Fifty-four patients used treatment with oral prednisone, 5 mg daily. Nine cases were excluded from the study because they did not have at least 2 rating scales within a minimum interval of 1 year and 6 were excluded for being co-infected with HIV and/or HCV. Thirty-nine patients met this criterion and were included for analysis. The majority were women (71.8%), the mean age was 56.51 years old (SD 9.74) and the median time of use of prednisone was 16 months. Thirty-two patients (82.05%) maintained the same OMDS, 5/39 (12.82%) had clinical worsening and 2/39 (5.13%) improved.

Conclusions: There was a trend of clinical stability with the use of oral corticosteroids. However, randomized controlled trials are necessary to evaluate the use in clinical practices in all stages of HAM.

Disclosure of interest: Nothing to disclose.