

Review of: "Tocilizumab Plus Corticosteroid in Elderly Patients Hospitalized With COVID-19 Pneumonia: A Retrospective Cohort Study"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This is a descriptive study regarding the first wave of COVID*19 and a period when treatment choices were made not based on a guideline, but according to the available drugs in the hospital and the decision of the doctor following the patient. These facts make it very difficult to draw conclusions and compare 2 groups of patients which are not defined in details. There are many issues that are not very clear:

1. Did the group of patients receive corticosteroids and tocilizumab at the same time from the beginning of treatment or was tocilizumab added on later to patients that were not responding to steroids?
2. What was the period of time for treatment was it equal for both groups?
3. Is there any hint on how it was decided to start one or the other treatment? (maybe there might be clinical notes taken during the follow-up of the patients)
4. There are also different drugs like remdesivir that are also used for COVID treatment which might have influenced the results.
5. Was the hepatic injury related to drugs only? Or was it because the patients developed a multiorgan failure due to infection?
6. The severe group that received more drugs including tocilizumab might have influenced the conclusion and might be the reason why tocilizumab was not effective and had more side effects.