

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

Ludovica Capitelli<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Naples Federico II

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This is a descriptive study regarding the first wave of COVID-19, in which authors compare the clinical effect of tocilizumab+corticosteroid versus corticosteroid use among COVID-19 patients. I read with interest the article. The combination of immunosuppressive agents such as tocilizumab is a promising treatment option. Only few reports have examined the combination of corticosteroid and tocilizumab in the real world, and this study was interesting because it examined a very large number of patients. The major limitation of the study is being retrospective, observational cohort study. An other limitation is that the timing of tocilizumab administration in this report is at the discretion of the attending physician. If the patients had improved on corticosteroids alone, they may not have needed additional doses of tocilizumab. If the poor response to corticosteroids alone led to the addition of tocilizumab, the combination group would have worse outcomes. It seems that the patients receiving tocilizumab treatment were more severely ill, according to the initial respiratory support.

I believe that the article would add more confusion, rather than clarity. I wouldn't like to give priority for publication of this manuscript.