

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.

Thank you for the invitation to review this paper. The author determined whether adding tocilizumab to corticosteroids decreases the incidence of mechanical ventilation in older patients compared to corticosteroids used as single therapy.

The paper is very well written! But I have to point out some parts of it which have to be reworked or at least more information should be added in the paper.

Minor points:

- from an inflammatory point of view we only have the information for CRP, which is not enough. We need at least a few more lab results to see a clearer compartment between the groups. More data should be provided for example for leukocytes, lymphocytes and D-dimer.

- In relation to the Tocilizumab treatment - there is no information for IL-6 levels of the patients - information should be provided if they were tested and if not, the reason why.

- More information should be provided on the administration of the Tocilizumab - how many days since the start of the symptoms the medication is prescribed. Is it at the start of the infection (less than three days) or more? Median results should be provided.

- The dosage that is used for Tocilizumab can be easily overestimated and to be absolutely insufficient for successful treatment of the patients, so the conclusion that says that the treatment can be harmful I cannot agree with, because the usual prescribed dose is not used in the treatment protocol. The ratio "total dose/kg" must be showed in order to see whether that ratio is associated or not with outcomes.

In the current state I would invite the authors to make a revision. After that it might be reconsidered for publication.

With Kind Regards!