



MEDICAL THERAPIES AND PHARMACOLOGY

CUTANEOUS ADVERSE EVENTS IN PATIENTS TREATED WITH ANTI-PD1 IMMUNOTHERAPY

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BACKGROUND: Nivolumab and pembrolizumab are currently approved as anti-PD1 immune checkpoints therapies for metastatic melanoma. Cutaneous adverse events (CAEs) as erythematous eruption, acneiform rash, vitiligo and prurigo can develop during the treatment.

OBSERVATION: We describe the CAEs occurred in 6 patients (4 men and 2 women; mean age 66.5 years) affected by metastatic melanoma, who were treated with pembrolizumab (5) and nivolumab (1) during the period October 2016 and August 2018. Vitiligo was observed in 3 of 6 patients (2 males, 1 female), pityriasis lichenoides et varioliformis acuta (PLEVA) in 2/8, hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) in 1/8 and Kaposi's Sarcoma (KS) in 1 patient. Vitiligo lesions occurred after a median time of 16 months, located on the upper extremities in 2 of 3 patients and on the face in 1. The two male patients who presented PLEVA had an itchy, polymorphous skin eruption consisting of crusted maculopapular lesions on the whole body surface except for the face. Skin lesions appeared after an average of 13 months from the start of therapy. An additional patient developed few vitiligo lesions on the upper extremities and HS after 6 months of treatment. HS was characterized by asymptomatic pimple-like bumps on the axillae associated with folliculitis on the back. One 74-years old female developed after 18 months of treatment two indolent purple plaques on the right leg histologically diagnosed as KS. All the patients who presented CAEs received topical steroid while additional topical fucidic acid was used for the HS. No one interrupted the anti-PD1 treatment, achieving a partial response or a stable disease.

KEY MESSAGE: A variety of CAEs may develop during treatment with anti-PD1 inhibitors and they can be successfully managed with surgery or topical therapies.

