

PSORIASIS

LONG-TERM ORAL PENICILLIN IN CHRONIC PLAQUE PSORIASIS (CPP): A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL

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Introduction: Group A Streptococcal infection has been implicated in initial attack of acute guttate psoriasis, approximately 68% of these develop typical CPP later in life. Our earlier trial demonstrated effectiveness of prolonged therapy with Benzathine Penicillin in CPP.

Objective: To study the efficacy of oral Penicillin in patients with CPP.

Materials and Method: 100 adult CPP patients with moderate to severe disease activity (BSA score >3%) were enrolled after obtaining written consent. Random number sequencing was used. Fifty patients were randomized to receive a course of oral Penicillin - 400mg twice daily for ten days, followed by 10 days Penicillin free period. Nine such courses were administered over a duration of 6 months - Group A. Oral Penicillin was chosen over Benzathine penicillin because of similar spectrum, easier administration, safer side-effect profile and low cost of therapy. Remaining 50 patients received placebo with the same schedule (Group B). Patients with mild disease activity, pustular psoriasis, known drug allergy to penicillin or those not consenting were excluded. Ethical clearance was obtained. Relevant clinical and severity evaluation were done every 3 weeks to monitor the progress of disease. Patients were followed up for six months post therapy.

Results: Both groups were similar in terms of patient characteristics and disease severity (Basal PASI 32.42±12.58 - Group A v/s 34.77±11.48 - Group B). Significant improvement in PASI score was noted from 12 week onwards in Group A as compared to Group B (mean 27.63±10.74 v/s 34.62±15.15). The benefit in Group A persisted till the end of follow up (mean 4.32±5.16 v/s 32.72±16.20). Seven patients in Group A had a relapse during follow up which was associated with upper respiratory tract infection and was of mild severity.

Conclusion: Long term Oral Penicillin in CPP is associated with clinically significant and sustained improvement in PASI score.