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Title: Incidence of tuberculosis among anti-TNF users in patients with previous history of tuberculosis

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Body: OBJECTIVE We investigated the incidence of tuberculosis (TB) in patients with a previous TB history on anti-tumor necrosis factor (TNF) therapy. DESIGN Retrospective analysis of 101 patients with previous history of TB receiving TNF antagonists between December 2004 and September 2012 in Asan Medical Center, Seoul, South Korea. RESULTS Immune-mediated inflammatory diseases (IMIDs) included Crohn's disease in 55 patients (54.5%), rheumatoid arthritis in 27 (26.7%), and ankylosing spondylitis in 13 (12.9%). Mean patient age was 40.4±16.0 years, and 51 (50.5%) were male; of these, 53 (52.5%) had a history of pulmonary TB, 47 (46.5%) had intestinal TB, and one (1.0%) had cervical TB lymphadenitis. Chest radiography revealed lesions suggestive of TB sequalae in 33 (32.7%) patients. Positive results on tuberculin skin tests and interferon-gamma release assays were observed in 22 (21.8%) and 45 (44.6%) patients, respectively. Eleven patients (10.9%) were treated for latent TB infection (LTBI), 10 due to previous inappropriate anti-TB treatment and one due to recent TB contact, irrespective of LTBI test results. The median follow-up after TNF antagonist initiation was 31.5 months. Active TB, 6 years later, was observed in one patient (1.0%) not treated for LTBI. CONCLUSIONS TNF antagonists are safe for patients with IMIDs and a previous history of TB if LTBI treatment is added, based on adequacy of previous anti-TB treatment and recent contact history.