Adalimumab in combination with methotrexate for refractory uveitis associated with juvenile idiopathic arthritis: a RCT

Athimalaipet V Ramanan,1,2* Andrew D Dick,3,4,5 Ashley P Jones,6 Dyfrig A Hughes,7 Andrew McKay,6 Anna Rosala-Hallas,6 Paula R Williamson,6 Ben Hardwick,6 Helen Hickey,6 Naomi Rainford,6 Graeme Hickey,6 Ruwanthi Kolamunnage-Dona,6 Giovanna Culeddu,7 Catrin Plumpton,7 Efionwa Wood,7 Sandrine Compeyrot-Lacassagne,8 Patricia Woo,8 Clive Edelsten8 and Michael W Beresford9,10 on behalf of the SYCAMORE Study Group

1Department of Paediatric Rheumatology, University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust, Bristol, UK
2Bristol Medical School, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK
3Bristol Eye Hospital, Bristol, UK
4School of Clinical Sciences, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK
5University College London Institute of Ophthalmology and National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Biomedical Research Centre at Moorfields Eye Hospital and University College London Institute of Ophthalmology, London, UK
6Department of Biostatistics, Institute of Translational Medicine, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, UK
7Centre for Health Economics and Medicines Evaluation, Bangor University, Bangor, UK
8Great Ormond Street Hospital, London, UK
9Department of Paediatric Rheumatology, Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust, Liverpool, UK
10Department of Women’s and Children’s Health, Institute of Translational Medicine, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, UK

*Corresponding author avramanan@hotmail.com

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Plain English summary

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Plain English summary

Juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA) is one of the most common rheumatic diseases in children and young people, who are at risk of developing inflammation in an area of the eye called the uvea (called uveitis).

The purpose of the study was to look at how effective the use of adalimumab in combination with methotrexate (MTX) is compared with using MTX alone to treat JIA-associated uveitis.

A total of 90 children (aged 2–18 years) taking MTX with JIA-associated uveitis took part in the study.

If the inflammation in a patient’s eye or eyes was not getting better during the 18 months, the patient was told to stop taking the study drug.

It was found that those patients who were taking placebo and MTX in the trial stopped taking the study drug sooner than those who were taking adalimumab and MTX. This means that adalimumab and MTX was better at treating uveitis than MTX alone.

It was found that more patients taking adalimumab and MTX together either reduced or stopped taking topical steroids than the patients taking placebo and MTX.

It was found that patients taking adalimumab and MTX together experienced more side effects than those taking placebo with MTX. However, these were expected based on what was already known about adalimumab’s side effects.

An economic evaluation was conducted to estimate whether or not adalimumab would represent value for money for the NHS for this condition. This included long-term effects based on information about patients’ clarity of vision. The analysis showed that adalimumab may not be cost-effective, as the additional costs of treatment may not be justified by the benefits.

The final results show that although adalimumab used in combination with MTX does help to treat patients with JIA and uveitis, it may not represent good value for the NHS.
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