

Lay title: Responding to treatment with tocilizumab.

Full title: Use and effectiveness of tocilizumab among patients with rheumatoid arthritis: an observational study from the British Society for Rheumatology Biologics Register for rheumatoid arthritis.

Mari Kihara, Rebecca Davies, Lianne Kearsley-Fleet, Kath Watson, Mark Lunt, Deborah Symmons, Kimme L Hyrich, British Society for Rheumatology Biologics Register.

Tocilizumab is a type of treatment used in Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA). It works by targeting a substance within the body called Interleukin 6 (IL-6) which is known to cause inflammation, and is called an “IL-6 inhibitor” within a group known as “biologic therapy”.

Tocilizumab was launched in the UK in 2010. The BSRBR-RA recorded information about people starting this therapy, which included these two groups:

Group 1

People with RA starting tocilizumab who had not taken any other biologic drug in the past

Group 2

People with RA starting tocilizumab who had already received treatment with a biologic in the past

The BSRBR-RA researchers examined if there were any differences in how well the patients responded to the treatment between the people in both groups.

It was found that, after taking the differences in the groups of patients in to consideration, after 6 months no difference could be detected between these two groups in terms of their response to treatment with tocilizumab. This information will help doctors in the UK with their decisions on which treatment to prescribe for their patients with RA.

Should you wish to read this scientific paper in full, the text can be found here:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27913894>

