

TB Testing for Patients Receiving Anti-TNF Therapy

The Problem

Infliximab, etanercept, and adalimumab are available tumor necrosis factor (TNF) blocking agents for the treatment of patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Clinical trials have reported serious infection risk including tuberculosis (TB) associated with anti-TNF therapy. Furthermore, it appears that the risk of TB may be increased in patients treated with infliximab compared with those treated with etanercept.

Aim/Goal

To ensure that patients receiving infliximab had a Purified Protein Derivative (PPD) test prior to starting the treatment, and that patients with a positive PPD receive an INH (isoniazid) treatment.

The Team

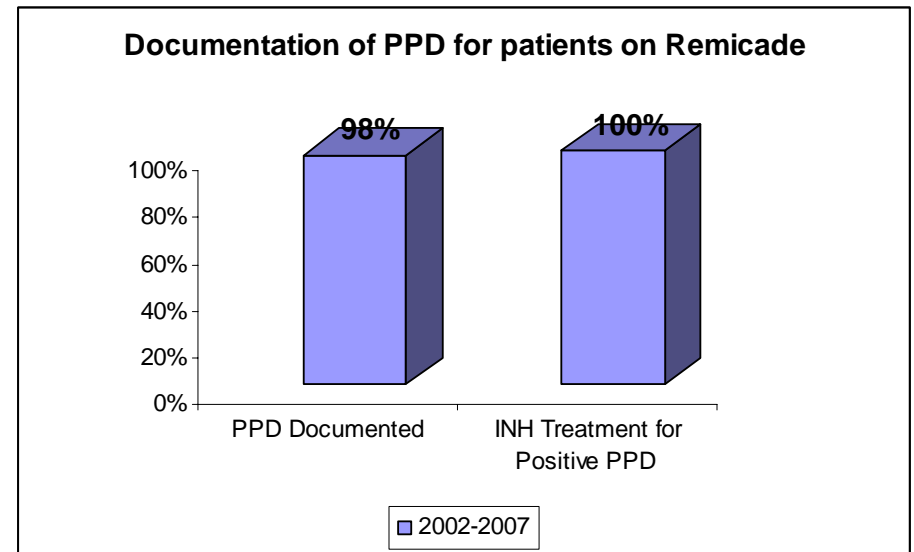
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The Interventions

Due to reports of reactivation of latent TB during anti-TNF treatment, a retrospective audit was conducted by the Rheumatology Division to ensure that patients receiving infliximab had a PPD test prior to starting the treatment. This project included the review of medical records to assess provision of PPD tests and INH treatment for patients with a positive PPD; monitoring of PPD data on an electronic database; providing feedback to physicians on a quarterly basis; and presenting the data at the Rheumatology faculty meetings.

The Results/Progress to Date

Attainment of 98% provision and documentation rate of PPD tests for patients receiving infliximab and a 100% INH (isoniazid) treatment rate for patients with a positive PPD (2002-2007; n=103 patients).



Next Steps/What Should Happen Next:

We will continue to monitor the provision of PPD tests for patients on infliximab treatment as well as INH treatment for patients with a positive PPD, with the goal of reaching a 100% adequate TB testing and treatment.



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