

Clinical Characteristics of Tuberculosis in IBD Patients Receiving Biologic Therapy

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Abstract

Introduction: The use of anti-TNF agents in patients with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), including Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, has increased over the past decades. However, due to their mechanism of action, these treatments increase the risk of reactivation of latent tuberculosis (TB) or the development of active TB, which can sometimes be severe or even fatal.

Materials and Methods: This is a retrospective, observational, descriptive study including IBD patients treated with anti-TNF agents (Infliximab or Adalimumab) from 2021 to December 2024, in whom latent TB was diagnosed during pre-treatment screening or active TB developed during therapy.

Results: Among 52 patients receiving anti-TNF therapy, 8 had latent TB, one had a history of pulmonary tuberculosis, and 3 developed active TB during treatment—one with pulmonary involvement and two with acute miliary TB. One of the three patients with active TB died from miliary tuberculosis.

Conclusion: Screening for latent TB using the Quantiferon test is essential for all patients eligible for anti-TNF therapy. Close monitoring is mandatory for patients on anti-TNF treatment, due to the high risk of developing severe TB, particularly in a country with high TB endemicity such as Algeria.

Keywords

Tuberculosis, Anti-TNF, Quantiferon, Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD).

