Dermatomyositis in Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis During Adalimumab Therapy

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To the Editor:

We read the recent letter by Brunasso, et al1 with great interest. They reported that dermatomyositis (DM) developed after 4.5 years of adalimumab therapy in patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA). We comment on development of myositis in patients with RA and whether it is actually related to anti-tumor necrosis factor (TNF) therapy.

An association of polymyositis (PM)/DM with RA has long been well known.2 RA can precede myositis, or it can develop after the diagnosis of PM/DM. We previously reported 2 patients with RA who were not receiving anti-TNF therapy, but developed anti-Jo-1 antibody-positive PM and DM.3,4 In these 2 patients, onset of RA preceded that of DM or PM by 1 and 19 years, respectively, which suggests that PM/DM can develop at any stage of RA. Therefore, the association of PM/DM with anti-TNF therapy needs to be demonstrated by the detection of cases in patients without RA.

REFERENCES