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Tertiary Centre Experience with Secukinumab in Hidradenitis Suppurativa: A Patient Survey

Daniela Mock Font*[1], vasiliki kourouni[2], Pallavi Gupta[1]

[1]university hospitals sussex nhs foundation trust, dermatology, brighton, United Kingdom
[2]university hospitals sussex nhs foundation trust, brighton, United Kingdom

Introduction & Objectives: Hidradenitis Suppurativa (HS) is a chronic, painful skin condition marked by recurring abscesses and scarring. Biologic therapies such as Secukinumab, an IL-17A inhibitor, are being used for HS despite limited data on effectiveness. This survey explores patient-reported experiences with Secukinumab to assess symptom control, flare-up patterns, antibiotic use, and overall treatment satisfaction.

Materials & Methods: A digital survey was distributed to individuals with HS currently or recently treated with Secukinumab. The form collected quantitative and qualitative responses on treatment duration, symptom response, side effects, and flare-up frequency. A total of 20 participants completed the survey. Data was analysed descriptively.

Results: All patients were on Secukinumab, with treatment durations ranging from less than 3 months to over a year. Antibiotic use remained high, with 45% reporting five or more courses in the past year and doxycycline, lymecycline, and co-amoxiclav were the antibiotics more commonly prescribed. However, only 44% found antibiotics somewhat helpful, while an equal proportion reported no benefit. Regarding Secukinumab's impact, 30% experienced moderate to significant improvement, whereas 30% reported no change and 20% noted worsened symptoms. Flare-up frequency remained the same or increased in 60% of patients, and 75% described recent flare-ups as severe or very severe. Additionally, 40% reported new areas of disease activity. Tolerability was generally favourable, with 75% reporting no side effects and 70% rating tolerance as good or very good. Injection site issues were rare, occurring in only 10% of participants. Some patients expressed concern over the lack of symptom control, side effects, or not being included as they would expect in treatment decisions.

Conclusion: Secukinumab was generally well tolerated, but symptom improvement was inconsistent. Many participants continued to experience frequent, severe flare-ups and relied heavily on antibiotics, indicating incomplete disease control. Qualitative responses emphasized the need for better communication, personalized care, and consideration of alternative or adjunctive treatments.

These findings suggest that while Secukinumab may benefit some, further monitoring, multidisciplinary support, and individualized treatment plans may be essential to improve outcomes in this complex condition.