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Pustular psoriasis following COVID-19: successful bimekizumab treatment.

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Case presentation: A 75-year-old man was under dermatology follow-up because of plaque psoriasis. He also suffered from ischemic heart disease, atrial fibrillation, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes mellitus and hypertension. He was on risankizumab and had previously received topical betamethasone/calcipotriol, UVB phototherapy, acitretin and apremilast. He attended the emergency department for fever, cough, and skin lesions worsening. He exhibited multiple intense red annular plaques, with scaly areas and pustules on their surface. They affected the lower and upper limbs, trunk and face. Polymerase chain reaction test was positive for SARS-CoV-2. A skin biopsy was performed. Typical psoriasis features were found, including the presence of subcorneal pustules. Despite the improvement in the rest of his symptoms, the skin lesions worsened, reaching a PASI of 44 with a BSA of 66% and PGA 6. Therefore, we decided to start bimekizumab treatment. After 4 weeks the patient showed a very significant improvement, persisting at week 8 with only a small plaque on the back (PASI 1.1; BSA 1; PGA 1).

Discussion: Bimekizumab is a biologic inhibitor of interleukins (IL) 17A and 17F. It has demonstrated efficacy and safety for plaque psoriasis in clinical trials and, recently, in real-world practice. However, there are just 3 reported cases of pustular psoriasis treated with bimekizumab. These patients showed improvement, achieving almost complete clearance of the skin lesions. Recently, a series of 21 patients with palmoplantar pustulosis treated with bimekizumab was published in which 81% achieved complete remission 1-4 months after starting treatment. This good response to bimekizumab in patients with pustular forms of psoriasis may be related to the IL-36 pathway, a key cytokine in the pathogenesis of this disease, since clinical trials showed a reduction in IL-36 levels in patients with plaque psoriasis treated with bimekizumab.

Conclusion: Despite the need for further evidence, the significant and rapid improvement of these patients suggests that bimekizumab may have an important role in the management of pustular psoriasis.