

Autoimmune Idiopathic Disorders in HCV patients: effect of direct Antiviral Agents (DAA) – The AIDAA study

Chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is associated with various rheumatic manifestations, such as cryoglobulinemic vasculitis¹. Some authors suggested that HCV may also negatively influence the prognosis of some idiopathic autoimmune disorders (AIDs), namely rheumatoid arthritis and Sjögren's syndrome, which are observed more often in HCV patients as compared to the general population^{2,3}. Most of the recent reports clearly demonstrated that HCV eradication by DAAs is associated with an improvement in HCV-related rheumatic manifestations. On the other hand, the effect of DAA treatment on the evolution of AIDs (such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, etc.) is unknown⁴.

Some reports stated that the rapid HCV clearance induced by DAAs may alter the activity and the surveillance function of the immune system, probably through a sudden improvement of the chronic HCV-associated inflammatory status⁵⁻⁷. Since a dysfunction of the immune system plays a central role in pathogenesis of AIDs, we hypothesise that HCV eradication by DAAs may influence the course of these diseases. The primary objective of the study is to investigate this issue according to the subjective perception of the patient by specific validated questionnaires and by a questionnaire based on visual analogue grading scales in the Swiss HCV population.

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