Cyclosporine Treatment for Interstitial Pneumonitis Associated with Dermatomyositis/Polymyositis

We read with interest the case report by Shinohara et al (1) and the editorial by Takizawa and Ito (2). Shinohara et al described a case of rapidly progressive interstitial lung disease associated with dermatomyositis (DM) who was successfully treated with cyclophosphamide pulse therapy. The case report and the editorial by Takizawa et al comment on the use of cyclosporine for this intractable interstitial lung disease. We would like to point out that we published an article concerning the use of cyclosporine for interstitial pneumonitis associated with dermatomyositis/polymyositis (PM) in Scand J Rheumatol (3). Our conclusion was that cyclosporine is effective against both myositis and interstitial pneumonitis when used early in the course of the disease. Although we treated three cases of interstitial pneumonitis associated with DM/PM who did die due to respiratory failure before 1991, four cases who were treated with cyclosporine early in the course of the disease after 1992 are still alive. And one of the four cases was thought to be a case of rapidly progressive interstitial lung disease associated with DM. We agree that a prospective trial is important to obtain a definitive result, but we could prove the effectiveness of cyclosporine by comparing with our previous cases.

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References