

OPEN

Safety of Tofacitinib in the Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis in Latin America Compared With the Rest of the World Population

Oswaldo M. Castañeda, MD,* Felix J. Romero, MD,† Ariel Salinas, MD,‡ Gustavo Citera, MD,§ Eduardo Mysler, MD,|| Oscar Rillo, MD,¶ Sebastiao C. Radominski, MD,# Mario H. Cardiel, MD, MSc,** Juan J. Jaller, MD,†† Carlos Alvarez-Moreno, MD,‡‡ Dario Ponce de Leon, MD,§§ Graciela Castelli, MD,|||| Erika G. García, MD,¶¶ Kenneth Kwok, MSc,### and Ricardo Rojo, MD***

Objective: Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic, autoimmune disease characterized by joint destruction. Tofacitinib is an oral Janus kinase inhibitor for the treatment of RA. This post hoc analysis assessed the safety of tofacitinib in Latin American (LA) patients with RA versus the Rest of World (RoW) population.

Methods: Data were pooled from 14 clinical studies of tofacitinib: six Phase 2, six Phase 3 and two long-term extension studies. Incidence rates (IRs; patients with events/100 patient-years of treatment exposure) were calculated for safety events of special interest combined across tofacitinib doses. 95% confidence intervals (CI) for IRs were calculated using the maximum likelihood method. Descriptive comparisons were made between LA and RoW (excluding LA) populations.

Results: This analysis included data from 984 LA patients and 4687 RoW patients. IRs for safety events of special interest were generally similar between LA and RoW populations, with overlapping 95% CIs. IRs for discontinuation due to adverse events, serious infections, tuberculosis, all

herpes zoster (HZ), serious HZ, malignancies (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) and major adverse cardiovascular events were numerically lower for LA versus RoW patients; IR for mortality was numerically higher. No lymphoma was reported in the LA population versus eight cases in the RoW population. Exposure (extent and length) was lower in the LA population (2148.33 patient-years [mean = 2.18 years]) versus RoW (10515.68 patient-years [mean = 2.24 years]).

Conclusion: This analysis of pooled data from clinical studies of tofacitinib in patients with RA demonstrates that tofacitinib has a consistent safety profile across LA and RoW patient populations.

Key Words: global, Janus kinase, Latin America, rheumatoid arthritis, safety, tofacitinib

(*J Clin Rheumatol* 2017;23: 193–199)

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic autoimmune disease characterized by synovial inflammation and joint destruction, and affects approximately 0.5–1.0% of the adult population in industrialized countries.¹ In Latin American (LA) countries, the overall prevalence of RA is estimated to range from 0.4 to 1.6%,² with regional variation apparent throughout LA. LA patients with RA differ from patients from the Rest of the World (RoW) in terms of genetic and epidemiologic factors, and in prognosis.^{2,3}

Common clinical practice for treatment of patients with RA in LA involves prescription of conventional synthetic disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (csDMARDs) as first-line therapy, followed by biologic DMARDs (bDMARDs) in the case of inadequate response.³ Despite the relative effectiveness of csDMARD treatment, not all patients with RA respond to treatment, and response may diminish over time.⁴ Many patients experience an inadequate clinical response to methotrexate,⁴ and although most patients treated aggressively with csDMARDs show rapid improvements, these effects are often not maintained following 1 year of treatment.⁴ Several bDMARDs are approved for use in LA, including abatacept, rituximab, tocilizumab, and the tumor necrosis factor inhibitors (TNFi) adalimumab, etanercept, infliximab, certolizumab pegol, and golimumab.^{5,6} However, given that not all patients respond to or tolerate treatment with DMARDs,⁴ and that the administration of injectable therapies represents a significant burden on

From the *Clínica Angloamericana, Lima, Peru; †Instituto Peruano del Hueso y la Articulación, Lima, Peru; ‡Hospital Nacional Alberto Sabogal, Bellavista, Callao, Peru; §Instituto de Rehabilitación Psicosfísica, Buenos Aires, Argentina; ||Organización Médica de Investigación, Buenos Aires, Argentina; ¶Section of Rheumatology, Department of Medicine, Hospital Dr I Pirovano, Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, Argentina; #Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, Brazil; **Centro de Investigación Clínica de Morelia, Morelia, México; ††Centro de Reumatología y Ortopedia, Barranquilla, Colombia; ‡‡Facultad de Medicina, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia; §§Pfizer Inc., Lima, Peru; |||Pfizer Inc., Buenos Aires, Argentina; ¶¶Pfizer Inc., Collegetown, PA, USA; ###Pfizer Inc., New York, NY, USA; and ***Pfizer Inc., Groton, CT, USA.

Conflicts of Interest and Source of Funding: This study was sponsored by Pfizer Inc. MO Castañeda has participated in advisory boards for and been a speaker and/or principal investigator for AbbVie, Bristol-Myers Squibb, GlaxoSmithKline, IQfarma, Janssen, MSD, Novartis, Perulab, Pfizer Inc., Roche, Roemmers and UCB. FJ Romero has nothing to disclose. A Salinas has been a speaker and/or principal investigator for Bristol-Myers Squibb, GlaxoSmithKline, Janssen, MSD, Pfizer Inc. and Roche. G Citera has received research grants, consultancy and speaker's fees from AbbVie, Bristol-Myers Squibb and Pfizer Inc. E Mysler has received research grants, consultancy and speaker's fees from AbbVie, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Eli Lilly, Janssen, MedImmune, Pfizer Inc. and Roche. O Rillo has participated in advisory boards for AstraZeneca and Janssen; has received research grants from Pfizer Inc.; and has been a speaker and/or principal investigator for AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb, GlaxoSmithKline, MSD, Pfizer Inc. and UCB Pharma. SC Radominski has received consultancy fees, speaker's fees and/or honoraria from Amgen, AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Celltrion, GlaxoSmithKline, Janssen, Pfizer Inc., Roche and Sanofi. MH Cardiel has received research grants, consultancy fees and speaker's fees from AbbVie, Astellas, AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Infinity, Janssen, Lilly, Merck, Pfizer Inc., Roche and UCB. JJ Jaller has received consultancy and speaker's fees from Amgen, Bristol-Myers Squibb, GlaxoSmithKline, Janssen, MSD, Novartis, Pfizer Inc., Roche and UCB. CA Alvarez-Moreno has received research grants, consultancy and speaker's fees from GlaxoSmithKline, Janssen-Cilag, MSD, Pfizer Inc. and Roche. D Ponce de Leon, G Castelli, K Kwok and R Rojo are employees and shareholders of Pfizer Inc. EG García was an employee and shareholder of Pfizer Inc. at the time the analysis was conducted.

Correspondence: Dario Ponce de Leon, MD, Jr Gonzalo Martin de Trujillo, 250 Dpt: 301 Lima, 33 Santiago de Surco, Peru.

E-mail: Dario.PoncedLeon@pfizer.com.

Copyright © 2017 The Author(s). Published by Wolters Kluwer Health, Inc.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivatives License 4.0 (CCBY-NC-ND), where it is permissible to download and share the work provided it is properly cited. The work cannot be changed in any way or used commercially without permission from the journal.

ISSN: 1076-1608

DOI: 10.1097/RHU.0000000000000498

LA health systems,² new therapies that demonstrate clinical effectiveness and acceptable safety over time are required for the treatment of RA in LA. Additionally, for patients with RA, the route of drug administration may influence their everyday lives. In certain regions, patients may have to travel long distances to access medical centers, which may preclude treatment compliance. In this sense, the majority of patients with RA would prefer oral treatment rather than an injection or intravenous infusion.⁷

Tofacitinib is an oral Janus kinase inhibitor for the treatment of RA. The efficacy and safety of tofacitinib in the treatment of RA, as monotherapy or in combination with csDMARDs, has been demonstrated in several Phase 2,^{8–13} Phase 3^{14–19} and long-term extension (LTE) studies.^{20,21} In LA, based on these results, tofacitinib has been included as second- or third-line treatment for RA in clinical practice guidelines from Argentina,²² Chile,²³ Colombia,²⁴ Mexico⁵ and Brazil.²⁵ American College of Rheumatology (ACR) 2015 guidelines for RA treatment recommend tofacitinib therapy for patients with inadequate response to, or failed treatment with, traditional DMARD therapy.²⁶

The management of RA in LA faces a number of challenges that can influence treatment response, including delays in specialist referral, limited resources, limited access to affordable medication, lack of informed decision making regarding public policies, and lack of education surrounding RA.^{2,3,27} Moreover, tuberculosis, visceral leishmaniasis, paracoccidiodomycosis, histoplasmosis, Chagas disease and malaria, among other infectious diseases, are endemic in some LA countries and also need to be taken into account when considering treatments for patients with RA due to an increased risk of infections with immunosuppressive therapies.²⁸

In this post hoc analysis of pooled data from Phase 2, Phase 3 and LTE studies of tofacitinib, the safety of tofacitinib in LA patients with RA was assessed in comparison with the RoW population.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Patients and Study Treatments

Data from 14 studies of tofacitinib in patients with RA (six Phase 2, six Phase 3 and two LTE studies) were pooled for this analysis (Table 1). Eligible patients were ≥ 18 years of age with active RA. Active RA was defined as ≥ 6 tender or painful joints (68-joint count) and ≥ 6 swollen joints (66-joint count) and by an erythrocyte sedimentation rate of >28 mm/hr or C-reactive protein level of >7 mg/l.

Phase 2 Studies

In two studies (NCT00413660¹⁰; NCT00603512¹²), patients were required to have a previous inadequate response to methotrexate; in three studies (NCT00147498⁹; NCT00550446⁸; NCT00687193¹³), patients had previous inadequate response to csDMARDs or bDMARDs; one study had no criteria for prior DMARD exposure (NCT01059864¹¹). Patients received tofacitinib 1–30 mg twice daily (BID) or placebo (tofacitinib 20 mg once-daily dose was included in one study [NCT00413660]¹⁰) as monotherapy (NCT00147498; NCT00550446; NCT00687193; NCT01059864) or in combination with background csDMARDs (mainly methotrexate; NCT00413660; NCT00603512). One study (NCT00550446⁸) included an active control arm of adalimumab 40 mg administered subcutaneously once every 2 weeks.

Phase 3 Studies

Patients had a previous inadequate response to methotrexate (ORAL Scan¹⁸ and ORAL Standard¹⁶), DMARDs (ORAL Solo¹⁴ and ORAL Sync¹⁹), or TNFi (ORAL Step¹⁷). ORAL Start¹⁵ enrolled patients who were methotrexate-naïve or had received

≤ 3 doses of methotrexate. At the time of this analysis, ORAL Start was an ongoing study; therefore, the study database had not yet been locked; some values may change for the final, locked study database; data presented here include up to Month 12 of the study. Patients were randomized to receive tofacitinib 5 mg BID, tofacitinib 10 mg BID, methotrexate (ORAL Start only¹⁵), adalimumab (ORAL Standard only¹⁶) or placebo as monotherapy (ORAL Start and ORAL Solo) or in combination with csDMARDs (ORAL Sync, ORAL Standard, ORAL Scan and ORAL Step). In ORAL Solo¹⁴ and ORAL Step¹⁷ patients randomized to receive placebo were automatically advanced to receive tofacitinib 5 mg BID or tofacitinib 10 mg BID in a blinded manner after 3 months. In ORAL Standard,¹⁶ ORAL Scan¹⁸ and ORAL Sync,¹⁹ patients receiving placebo and not achieving $\geq 20\%$ reduction from baseline in swollen and tender joint counts were advanced to receive tofacitinib 5 mg BID or tofacitinib 10 mg BID in a blinded manner after 3 months; all patients continuing to receive placebo were advanced in a blinded manner to tofacitinib after 6 months. In ORAL Start,¹⁵ patients randomized to receive methotrexate initiated treatment at a dose of 10 mg per week, with increments of 5 mg per week every 4 weeks to 20 mg per week by Week 8.

LTE Studies

Patients participating in qualifying Phase 1, Phase 2 or Phase 3 index studies were eligible for inclusion in one of two open-label LTE studies (ORAL Sequel²⁰ and NCT00661661²⁹; studies were ongoing at the time of analysis; therefore, the study databases had not yet been locked; some values may change for the final, locked study databases; data cut-off date: April 2013).

Patients from qualifying index studies initiated treatment in the LTE studies with tofacitinib 5 or 10 mg BID as monotherapy or in combination with background csDMARDs. For patients enrolling in the LTE within 14 days of participation in the index study, baseline values were those of the index study; for all other patients baseline was the start of the LTE study. Adjustments to tofacitinib dose and concomitant RA medications were permitted at the discretion of the investigator.

All studies were conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, Good Clinical Practice Guidelines established by the International Conference on Harmonization, and local country regulations. The studies were approved by a central or local institutional review board or an independent ethics committee. All patients provided written informed consent.

Safety Analyses

Safety data were pooled across all patients who received at least one dose of tofacitinib in any study included in the analysis. Data from patients in the placebo, adalimumab and methotrexate comparator treatment groups were not included due to small sample size in the LA population. LA countries that enrolled patients were Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela. The RoW population included all patients from the global population in the tofacitinib RA clinical program (all studies outlined in Table 1), excluding those patients from LA countries.

Safety data were calculated as incidence rates (IR; patients with events per 100 patient-years of treatment exposure) for safety events of special interest combined across tofacitinib doses. Safety events of special interest included in this analysis were discontinuations due to adverse events (AEs), serious infection events (SIEs), tuberculosis, opportunistic infections (excluding tuberculosis), all herpes zoster (HZ), serious HZ, malignancies (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer [NMSC]), lymphoma, major adverse

TABLE 1. Summary of the Tofacitinib Clinical Studies Included in this Analysis

Study	Phase	Main Inclusion Criteria	Duration	Background DMARD Therapy	Primary Endpoint
A3921019 ⁹	Phase 2a ^a	Active RA DMARD-IR or unacceptable toxicity (therapy discontinued)	6 weeks	None	ACR20 response rates at week 6
A3921025 ¹⁰	Phase 2b ^a	Active RA MTX-IR	24 weeks	MTX	ACR20 response rates at week 12
A3921035 ^{b8}	Phase 2b ^a	Active RA DMARD-IR or unacceptable toxicity (therapy discontinued)	24 weeks	None	ACR20 response rates at week 12
A3921039 ¹²	Phase 2 ^a	Active RA MTX-IR	12 weeks	MTX	ACR20 response rates at week 12
A3921040 ¹³	Phase 2 ^{ad}	Active RA DMARD-IR	12 weeks	None	ACR20 response rates at week 12
A3921109 ¹¹	Phase 2 ^c	Active RA	12 weeks	None	Change from baseline (week 6) in low density lipoprotein-cholesterol level at week 12
ORAL Solo ¹⁴	Phase 3 ^a	Active RA DMARD-IR	6 months	None	ACR20 response rates, HAQ-DI change from baseline and DAS28-4(ESR) < 2.6 at month 3
ORAL Start ^{15c}	Phase 3 ^a	Active RA MTX-naïve	24 months (month 12 data-cut presented in this analysis)	None	vdH mTSS change from baseline and ACR70 response rates at month 6
ORAL Sync ¹⁹	Phase 3 ^a	Active RA DMARD-IR	12 months	csDMARDs	ACR20 response rates and DAS28-4(ESR) < 2.6 at month 6; HAQ-DI change from baseline at month 3
ORAL Standard ¹⁶	Phase 3 ^a	Active RA MTX-IR	12 months	MTX	ACR20 response rates and DAS28-4(ESR) < 2.6 at month 6; HAQ-DI change from baseline at month 3
ORAL Scan ¹⁸	Phase 3 ^a	Active RA ≥3 distinct joint erosions MTX-IR	24 months	MTX	ACR20 response rates, vdH mTSS change from baseline and DAS28-4(ESR) < 2.6 at month 6; HAQ-DI change from baseline at month 3
ORAL Step ¹⁷	Phase 3 ^a	TNFi-IR	6 months	MTX	ACR20 response rates, HAQ-DI change from baseline and DAS28-4(ESR) < 2.6 at month 3
ORAL Sequel ²⁰	LTE ^f	Participation in a qualifying Phase 1, 2 or 3 study	Long-term	Concomitant therapy with csDMARDs was permitted	Laboratory safety data (chemistry, hematology, etc.) and adverse event reports
A3921041 ²⁹	LTE ^{6d}	Participation in a qualifying Phase 1, 2 or 3 study	Long-term	Concomitant therapy with csDMARDs was permitted	Adverse event reports, laboratory safety data and vital signs

^aRandomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled, parallel-group studies; ^bactive comparator = 40 mg QOW adalimumab; ^cactive comparator = MTX 10–20 mg/week; ^dstudy in Japanese patients; ^eall patients received open-label tofacitinib weeks 1 to 12, and randomized to receive atorvastatin or matching placebo weeks 6 to 12; ^fnon-randomized, open-label, parallel-group study.

ACR indicates American College of Rheumatology; DAS28-4(ESR), disease activity score in 28 joints using the erythrocyte sedimentation rate; csDMARD, conventional synthetic disease-modifying antirheumatic drug; DMARD-IR, inadequate response to disease-modifying antirheumatic drug; HAQ-DI, Health Assessment Questionnaire—Disability Index; MTX, methotrexate; MTX-IR, inadequate response to MTX; QOW, every other week; TNFi-IR, inadequate response to tumor necrosis factor inhibitors; vdH mTSS, van der Heijde modified total Sharp score.

cardiovascular events (MACE), and all-cause mortality. 95% confidence intervals (CI) for IRs were calculated using the maximum likelihood method. Descriptive comparisons were made between the LA and RoW populations of patients with RA; statistical comparisons were not performed.

RESULTS

Patients

Data from patients recruited in LA countries ($n = 984$) and the RoW ($n = 4687$) in the 14 Phase 2, Phase 3 and LTE tofacitinib clinical studies were included in the analysis. Baseline demographic characteristics were generally similar between LA and the RoW patient populations (Table 2). Total tofacitinib exposure was 2148.33 patient-years in the LA population and 10515.68 patient-years in the RoW population; mean exposure was 2.18 years and 2.24 years, respectively.

Safety

The IRs for safety events of special interest in patients receiving tofacitinib were generally similar between the LA and RoW populations, with 95% CIs that were generally overlapping (Table 3). IRs for opportunistic infections were similar for LA patients and RoW patients. Opportunistic infections that occurred in LA patients were esophageal candidiasis ($n = 4$; one patient had 2 separate events), sepsis ($n = 1$), pneumonia ($n = 1$), and separate events of HZ ($n = 1$) and cytomegalovirus hepatitis ($n = 1$) in the same patient.

IRs for discontinuation due to AEs, SIEs, tuberculosis, all HZ, serious HZ, malignancies (excluding NMSC) and MACE were numerically lower for LA patients compared with RoW patients. No cases of lymphoma were reported in the LA population; the IR for the RoW population was 0.08 (95% CI: 0.04–0.15; Table 3).

In the LA cohort, 10 patients died during the studies (IR for all-cause mortality 0.47 [95% CI: 0.25–0.87]), accounting for 30 days after the last dose of tofacitinib, compared with 25 patients (IR 0.24 [95% CI: 0.16–0.35]) from the RoW population (Table 3). Cause of death in LA patients was determined by the

TABLE 2. Demographics and Baseline Disease Characteristics for Patients from LA and Patients from RoW

	Latin America (N = 984)	Rest of World (N = 4687)
Age (years), mean (range)	48.7 (18.0–77.0)	53.0 (18.0–86.0)
Gender, n (%)		
Male	86 (8.7)	873 (18.6)
Female	898 (91.3)	3814 (81.4)
RA duration (years), mean (range)	8.1 (0.0–43.6)	8.6 (0.0–65.0)
HAQ-DI, mean (SD)	1.7 (0.7)	1.5 (0.7)
DAS28-4(ESR), mean (SD)	6.5 (1.1)	6.4 (0.9)
CRP (mg/L), mean (SD)	20.2 (25.3)	17.9 (22.8)
Prior MTX, n (%)	184 (18.7)	813 (17.3)
Concomitant corticosteroid at baseline, n (%)	159 (64.6)	607 (58.6)

CRP indicates C-reactive protein; DAS28-4(ESR), disease activity score in 28 joints using the erythrocyte sedimentation rate; HAQ-DI, Health Assessment Questionnaire—Disability Index; MTX, methotrexate; RA, rheumatoid arthritis; SD, standard deviation.

TABLE 3. Incidence Rates for Safety Events of Special Interest for Patients from LA and Patients from RoW

Patients With Event (n) IR (95% CI), Patients With Events/100 Patient-Years	Latin America (N = 984)	Rest of World (N = 4687)
Total exposure, patient-years	2148.33	10,515.68
Mean exposure, patient-years	2.18	2.24
Discontinuation due to AEs	111	815
	5.22 (4.33–6.29)	7.84 (7.32–8.40)
Serious infection events	50	318
	2.35 (1.78–3.11)	3.05 (2.73–3.40)
Tuberculosis	1	25
	0.05 (0.01–0.33)	0.24 (0.16–0.35)
Opportunistic infections ^a	6	26
	0.28 (0.13–0.62)	0.25 (0.17–0.36)
All herpes zoster	69	435
	3.39 (2.68–4.29)	4.39 (4.00–4.83)
Serious herpes zoster	2	33
	0.09 (0.02–0.37)	0.31 (0.22–0.44)
Malignancies (excluding NMSC)	9	98
	0.42 (0.22–0.81)	0.93 (0.77–1.14)
Lymphoma	0	8 ^b
	N/A	0.08 (0.04–0.15)
MACE ^c	1	37
	0.08 (0.01–0.56)	0.53 (0.39–0.73)
All-cause mortality ^d	10	25
	0.47 (0.25–0.87)	0.24 (0.16–0.35)

^aExcluding tuberculosis; ^ban additional 2 cases of lymphoma have been reported from the ongoing blinded Phase 3 study (A3921069); ^cexposure for MACE is lower than for other safety events as MACE adjudication only applied to data after February 25, 2009; exposure in LA population = 1274.39 patient-years; exposure in RoW population = 7001.95 patient-years; ^dwithin 30 days of last study drug.

AE indicates adverse event; CI, confidence interval; IR, incidence rate; N/A, not applicable; MACE, major adverse cardiovascular event; NMSC, non-melanoma skin cancer.

investigator to be related to tofacitinib treatment in 5 of the 10 cases—three cases of pneumonia, one case of appendicitis, and one case of cardio-respiratory arrest (investigator assessment). Causes of death for patients in the LA and RoW cohorts are listed in Table 4.

DISCUSSION

The safety profile of tofacitinib across the global clinical trial program in patients with RA has been well characterized and previously reported.^{20,30–32} This pooled, post hoc analysis of tofacitinib was conducted to compare the safety of tofacitinib in LA versus RoW, and includes one of the largest cohorts of DMARD-treated patients with RA from LA countries to be evaluated.

Our findings suggest that the safety profile of tofacitinib in patients with RA is generally similar between patients from LA and patients from RoW. The IRs for discontinuation due to AEs, SIEs, tuberculosis, malignancies (excluding NMSC) and MACE reported for patients receiving tofacitinib in the LA and RoW populations are generally consistent with those reported for biologic DMARDs in the global population of patients with RA.^{32–35} The rate of opportunistic infections in LA tofacitinib-treated patients was similar compared with the RoW population and consistent with the global analysis of tofacitinib-treated patients.³⁶

TABLE 4. Causes of Death in Patients from LA and Patients from RoW

Cause of Death ^a	No. Patients	
	Latin America	RoW
Acute myocardial infarction		1
Acute respiratory distress syndrome		1
Appendicitis	1	
Arrhythmia		1
Arteriosclerosis		1
Aspiration		1
Bronchopneumonia		1
Cardiac arrest	1	1
Cardiac failure acute		1
Cardiopulmonary failure		1
Cardio-respiratory arrest	1	1
Cerebrovascular accident	1	
Completed suicide		2
Death ^b	1	
Dyspnea	1	
Encephalitis		1
Gallbladder cancer	1	
Hemorrhage intracranial		1
Lung cancer metastatic		3
Pancreatitis acute		1
Pneumonia	3	2
Pulmonary embolism		1
Renal failure acute		1
Respiratory failure		1
Road traffic accident		1
Sepsis		1
Total deaths	10	25

^aThe preferred term adverse event leading to death is listed for deaths occurring within 30 days of last study drug; ^b70-year-old patient died suddenly, cause unknown.

Although the LA region is associated with increased risk of tuberculosis,³⁷ and the risk of tuberculosis when using immunomodulatory therapies is proportional to the background rate of tuberculosis,³⁸ the rate of tuberculosis observed in LA tofacitinib-treated patients in this analysis was low, and similar to that observed for RoW patients (which included patients from countries in Asia and Eastern Europe that also have high rates of tuberculosis and other opportunistic infections). Given the increased risk of tuberculosis in LA countries, it may be possible that physicians in LA are inherently more aware of the relevant risks of immunosuppressant therapy for patients with RA. This may contribute to the similar observed rate of tuberculosis compared to the RoW population, despite the high background tuberculosis prevalence in LA. It should also be noted that patients who had tuberculosis at the screening visit were excluded from Phase 2 tofacitinib studies; however, in tofacitinib Phase 3 studies, patients with tuberculosis at screening were permitted entry after they received preventative isoniazid therapy. No patients in this group developed tuberculosis. These observations also support the recent ACR recommendation that patients with RA initiating tofacitinib therapy should undergo screening for tuberculosis (and treatment, if necessary) as is recommended for patients undergoing therapy with bDMARDs.²⁶

The all-cause mortality rate for patients with RA from LA countries was numerically higher than that for patients with RA in the RoW population. This observed difference may be a consequence of differences between the two populations in terms of comorbidities or socioeconomic factors including increased mortality rates due to infection which are observed in many LA countries.³⁹ The IR for all-cause mortality (death within 30 days post-last dose) for tofacitinib in the LA population was similar to rates reported with TNFi and other bDMARDs.^{32–34,40}

It is known that patients with RA have an increased risk of HZ compared with the general population, and that certain RA therapies can exacerbate this risk.^{30,41} In this analysis, the IRs of all HZ events with tofacitinib in both the LA and RoW populations were higher than those reported for bDMARDs.⁴² Rates of HZ reported in this analysis are consistent with crude incidence rates for HZ reported with baricitinib in patients with RA,⁴³ suggesting that the increased rate of HZ may be a class effect of JAK inhibitors and not specific to tofacitinib. The IRs for all HZ events and serious HZ events were numerically lower in the LA population versus RoW population. Data presented here are also consistent with a pooled analysis of tofacitinib Phase 2 and Phase 3 studies comparing US versus RoW populations,⁴⁴ where the IRs for all HZ and serious HZ were numerically lower in the US population versus the RoW (non-US) population. In the tofacitinib RA development program, the overall risk of HZ was increased and particularly in patients from Japan and Korea.³⁰ Additionally, genetic analysis of ~5300 tofacitinib-treated patients identified that interleukin-17RB polymorphism associated with increased risk of HZ was more prevalent in East Asian patients.⁴⁵ In patients with RA initiating therapy with tofacitinib, zoster vaccination has been shown to be effective in boosting immunity against varicella zoster virus.⁴⁶

A pooled analysis of data from tofacitinib Phase 1, 2, 3, and LTE studies (cut-off date was April 2014 and included up to 72 months of follow-up) identified geographic region (Asia—specifically Japan/Korea), baseline glucocorticoid use, higher doses of tofacitinib, age, and background DMARD use as risk factors for HZ in tofacitinib-treated patients (after adjusting for other covariates). This analysis suggested that patients using tofacitinib monotherapy without glucocorticoids have a lower risk of developing HZ.⁴² Additionally, a post hoc analysis showed that the following baseline risk factors were associated with the development of HZ in tofacitinib-treated LA patients: increased age; age category (≥ 50 vs. < 50 years) and baseline corticosteroid use.⁴¹ Therefore, physicians should consider these risk factors when deciding treatment regimens for patients with RA.

A number of limitations of the current analysis should be considered. This was a retrospective, post hoc analysis of clinical studies that were not designed for the purpose of comparing LA and RoW data. Data were pooled across Phase 2, Phase 3, and LTE studies; therefore, safety data in LA patients included in this analysis are subject to different patient populations, including differences in previous treatment and failed treatments, different concomitant therapies and different study durations. The LA patient population in this analysis was substantially smaller than the RoW population and had less extent and duration of exposure. These factors should be considered when interpreting the findings; in particular, any comparison of long-latency AEs should be made with caution. Safety data for the LA subpopulation receiving tofacitinib were not compared with data from the placebo, adalimumab and methotrexate arms included in the original studies due to the small sample sizes. Furthermore, no formal statistical comparisons of safety data in LA patients versus RoW patients were conducted due to the relatively low number of patients in the LA patient population compared with the RoW population.

This analysis represents one of the largest datasets comparing the safety of DMARD therapy for RA in the LA population versus the RoW population. Data such as these are important in assessing the long-term safety and tolerability of novel therapies, including tofacitinib, for the treatment of patients with RA in LA. In summary, these data provide evidence that tofacitinib has a consistent safety profile across LA and RoW patient populations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors thank Elaine Hoffman for statistical guidance during drafting of the manuscript. Medical writing support under the guidance of the authors was provided by Daniel Binks, PhD, of Complete Medical Communications and funded by Pfizer Inc.

REFERENCES

- Scott DL, Wolfe F, Huizinga TW. Rheumatoid arthritis. *Lancet*. 2010; 376:1094–1108.
- Burgos-Vargas R, Catoggio LJ, Galarza-Maldonado C, et al. Current therapies in rheumatoid arthritis: a Latin American perspective. *Reumatol Clin*. 2013;9:106–112.
- Cardiel MH. Treating rheumatoid arthritis in Latin America: current challenges and future treatment strategies. *Int J Clin Rheumatol*. 2012;7: 139–142.
- van Vollenhoven RF. Treatment of rheumatoid arthritis: state of the art 2009. *Nat Rev Rheumatol*. 2009;5:531–541.
- Cardiel MH, Díaz-Borjón A, Vázquez Del Mercado Espinosa M, et al. Update of the Mexican College of Rheumatology guidelines for the pharmacologic treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. *Reumatol Clin*. 2014;10: 227–240.
- da Mota LM, Cruz BA, Brenol CV, et al. 2012 Brazilian Society of Rheumatology Consensus for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. *Rev Bras Reumatol*. 2012;52:152–174.
- Augustovski F, Beratarrechea A, Irazola V, et al. Patient preferences for biologic agents in rheumatoid arthritis: a discrete-choice experiment. *Value Health*. 2013;16:385–393.
- Fleischmann R, Cutolo M, Genovese MC, et al. Phase IIb dose-ranging study of the oral JAK inhibitor tofacitinib (CP-690,550) or adalimumab monotherapy versus placebo in patients with active rheumatoid arthritis with an inadequate response to disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs. *Arthritis Rheum*. 2012;64:617–629.
- Kremer JM, Bloom BJ, Breedveld FC, et al. The safety and efficacy of a JAK inhibitor in patients with active rheumatoid arthritis: results of a double-blind, placebo-controlled phase IIa trial of three dosage levels of CP-690,550 versus placebo. *Arthritis Rheum*. 2009;60:1895–1905.
- Kremer JM, Cohen S, Wilkinson BE, et al. A phase IIb dose-ranging study of the oral JAK inhibitor tofacitinib (CP-690,550) versus placebo in combination with background methotrexate in patients with active rheumatoid arthritis and an inadequate response to methotrexate alone. *Arthritis Rheum*. 2012;64:970–981.
- McInnes IB, Kim HY, Lee SH, et al. Open-label tofacitinib and double-blind atorvastatin in rheumatoid arthritis patients: a randomised study. *Ann Rheum Dis*. 2014;73:124–131.
- Tanaka Y, Suzuki M, Nakamura H, et al. Phase II study of tofacitinib (CP-690,550) combined with methotrexate in patients with rheumatoid arthritis and an inadequate response to methotrexate. *Arthritis Care Res (Hoboken)*. 2011;63:1150–1158.
- Tanaka Y, Takeuchi T, Yamanaka H, et al. Efficacy and safety of tofacitinib as monotherapy in Japanese patients with active rheumatoid arthritis: a 12-week, randomized, phase 2 study. *Mod Rheumatol*. 2015;25: 514–521.
- Fleischmann R, Kremer J, Cush J, et al. Placebo-controlled trial of tofacitinib monotherapy in rheumatoid arthritis. *N Engl J Med*. 2012;367: 495–507.
- Lee EB, Fleischmann R, Hall S, et al. Tofacitinib versus methotrexate in rheumatoid arthritis. *N Engl J Med*. 2014;370:2377–2386.
- van Vollenhoven RF, Fleischmann R, Cohen S, et al. Tofacitinib or adalimumab versus placebo in rheumatoid arthritis. *N Engl J Med*. 2012; 367:508–519.
- Burmester GR, Blanco R, Charles-Schoeman C, et al. Tofacitinib (CP-690,550) in combination with methotrexate in patients with active rheumatoid arthritis with an inadequate response to tumour necrosis factor inhibitors: a randomised phase 3 trial. *Lancet*. 2013;381:451–460.
- van der Heijde D, Tanaka Y, Fleischmann R, et al. Tofacitinib (CP-690,550) in patients with rheumatoid arthritis receiving methotrexate: twelve-month data from a twenty-four-month phase III randomized radiographic study. *Arthritis Rheum*. 2013;65:559–570.
- Kremer J, Li ZG, Hall S, et al. Tofacitinib in combination with nonbiologic disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs in patients with active rheumatoid arthritis: a randomized trial. *Ann Intern Med*. 2013;159:253–261.
- Wollenhaupt J, Silverfield J, Lee EB, et al. Safety and efficacy of tofacitinib, an oral janus kinase inhibitor, for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis in open-label, longterm extension studies. *J Rheumatol*. 2014;41: 837–852.
- Wollenhaupt J, Silverfield J, Lee EB, et al. Tofacitinib, an oral Janus kinase inhibitor, in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis: safety and clinical and radiographic efficacy in open-label, long-term extension studies over 7 years [abstract]. *Arthritis Rheumatol*. 2015;67(Suppl 10):1645.
- Citera G, Schneeberger EE. Updated Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis: Tofacitinib. Available at: http://www.reumatologia.org.ar/docs/Tofacitinib_2014.pdf. Accessed August 20, 2014.
- Ministerio de Salud Gobierno de Chile. Guía Clínica AUGe: Artritis Reumatoide, Serie Guías Clínicas MINSAL 2014. Available at: <http://www.hazteelexamen.cl/sites/default/files/files/GPC%20Artritis.pdf>. Accessed October 19, 2015.
- Ministerio de Salud y Protección Social. Guía de Práctica Clínica artritis reumatoide. Available at: <http://gpc.minsalud.gov/guias/Documents/Artritis%20Reumatoidea/GPC%20AR%20COMPLETA.pdf>. Accessed January 24, 2017.
- da Mota LM, Cruz BA, de Albuquerque CP, et al. Update on the 2012 Brazilian Society of Rheumatology Guidelines for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis: position on the use of Tofacitinib. *Rev Bras Reumatol*. 2015;55:512–521.
- Singh JA, Saag KG, Bridges SL Jr, et al. 2015 American College of Rheumatology Guideline for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. *Arthritis Rheumatol*. 2016;68:1–26.
- Cardiel MH, Pons-Estel BA, Sacnun MP, et al. Treatment of early rheumatoid arthritis in a multinational inception cohort of Latin American patients: the GLADAR experience. *J Clin Rheumatol*. 2012;18:327–335.
- Barreto ML, Teixeira MG, Bastos FI, et al. Successes and failures in the control of infectious diseases in Brazil: social and environmental context, policies, interventions, and research needs. *Lancet*. 2011;377: 1877–1889.
- Yamanaka H, Tanaka Y, Takeuchi T, et al. Tofacitinib, an oral Janus kinase inhibitor, as monotherapy or with background methotrexate, in Japanese patients with rheumatoid arthritis: an open-label, long-term extension study. *Arthritis Res Ther*. 2016;18:34.
- Winthrop KL, Yamanaka H, Valdez H, et al. Herpes zoster and tofacitinib therapy in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. *Arthritis Rheumatol*. 2014;66:2675–2684.
- Kremer JM, Kivitz AJ, Simon-Campos JA, et al. Evaluation of the effect of tofacitinib on measured glomerular filtration rate in patients with active rheumatoid arthritis: results from a randomised controlled trial. *Arthritis Res Ther*. 2015;17:95.
- Cohen S, Radominski SC, Gomez-Reino JJ, et al. Analysis of infections and all-cause mortality in Phase II, Phase III, and long-term extension

- studies of tofacitinib in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2014;66:2924–2937.
33. Schiff MH, Kremer JM, Jahreis A, et al. Integrated safety in tocilizumab clinical trials. *Arthritis Res Ther.* 2011;13:R141.
 34. van Vollenhoven RF, Emery P, Bingham CO 3rd, et al. Long-term safety of rituximab in rheumatoid arthritis: 9.5-year follow-up of the global clinical trial programme with a focus on adverse events of interest in RA patients. *Ann Rheum Dis.* 2013;72:1496–1502.
 35. Ahadiet S, Checchio T, Tensfeldt T, et al. Meta-analysis of malignancies, serious infections, and serious adverse events with tofacitinib and biologic treatment in rheumatoid arthritis clinical trials. *Arthritis Rheum.* 2012;64:S726.
 36. Winthrop KL, Park SH, Gul A, et al. Tuberculosis and other opportunistic infections in tofacitinib-treated patients with rheumatoid arthritis. *Ann Rheum Dis.* 2015;75:1133–1138.
 37. World Health Organization. Global Tuberculosis Report 2013. Available at: http://www.who.int/tb/publications/global_report/en/. Accessed July 11, 2014.
 38. Carmona L, Gómez-Reino JJ, Rodríguez-Valverde V, et al. Effectiveness of recommendations to prevent reactivation of latent tuberculosis infection in patients treated with tumor necrosis factor antagonists. *Arthritis Rheum.* 2005;52:1766–1772.
 39. Bliss KE. Health in Latin America and the Caribbean: a report of the CSIS Global Health Policy Center. Available at: http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/090422_bliss_healthlatinamer_web.pdf. Accessed December 14, 2015.
 40. Simard JF, Neovius M, Askling J. Mortality rates in patients with rheumatoid arthritis treated with tumor necrosis factor inhibitors: drug-specific comparisons in the Swedish Biologics Register. *Arthritis Rheum.* 2012;64:3502–3510.
 41. Zerbini CAF, Radominski SC, Cardiel MH, et al. Herpes zoster in patients with rheumatoid arthritis: pooled analyses of tofacitinib phase 2, 3 and long-term extension studies in a Latin American subpopulation. Abstract presented at the Sociedade Brasileira de Reumatologia—XXXII Congresso Brasileiro de Reumatologia, 2015.
 42. Winthrop K, Lindsey S, Fan H, et al. Herpes zoster and tofacitinib: the risk of concomitant nonbiologic therapy. *Ann Rheum Dis.* 2015;74:741.
 43. Fleischmann R, Takeuchi T, Schlichting DE, et al. Baricitinib, methotrexate, or baricitinib plus methotrexate in patients with early rheumatoid arthritis who had received limited or no treatment with disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs): phase 3 trial results. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2015;67:Abstract 1045.
 44. Cohen SB, Koenig A, Wang L, et al. Efficacy and safety of tofacitinib in US and non-US rheumatoid arthritis patients: pooled analyses of phase II and III. *Clin Exp Rheumatol.* 2016;34:32–36.
 45. Bing N, Zhou H, Zhang B, et al. Genome-wide trans-ancestry meta-analysis of herpes zoster in RA and PsO patients treated with tofacitinib. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2015;67:Abstract 566.
 46. Winthrop KL, Wouters A, Choy EH, et al. The effectiveness of Zoster vaccine in RA patients subsequently treated up to 19 months with tofacitinib. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2016;68:Abstract 2609.

2017 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting

November 3-8, 2017

San Diego Convention Center

111 W. Harbor Drive

San Diego, California 92101

Website : <http://www.rheumatology.org/Annual-Meeting>

Registration: Annual meeting registration and housing for members only opens May 31 at 9:00 AM ET.
Non members registration and housing opens June 14. Complete details will be available in May.

Abstract submission: Opens April 25

Abstract Submission Deadline – June 13