

AllianceRx Walgreens Prime study demonstrates increased adherence and improvement in symptoms for psoriasis patients switching to interleukin-17 inhibitors

Findings presented at National Association of Specialty Pharmacy Sept. 11 in Washington D.C.

ORLANDO, Fla. – Sept. 11, 2019 – [AllianceRx Walgreens Prime](#) announced results from a new study analyzing data from patients prescribed interleukin-17 (IL-17) inhibitors for psoriasis. Patients reported improvements in psoriatic symptoms and demonstrated increased medication adherence after switching to one of the three IL-17 medications included in the study. The study was conducted with Walgreens, a parent company of AllianceRx Walgreens Prime.

Psoriasis is a chronic disease characterized by raised, red, scaly patches, or lesions on the skin which are often itchy and painful. In people with psoriasis, a cytokine, or protein, called IL-17 targets healthy cells and causes inflammation. Studies have shown that inhibiting IL-17 can help clear psoriasis. Newer biologic medications, such as secukinumab, ixekizumab or brodalumab, focus on inhibiting IL-17.

“The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved IL-17 inhibitor medications over the past few years. It is important to understand the utilization associated with these newer, third-generation medications in the treatment of psoriasis,” says Rick Miller, vice president, clinical and professional services at AllianceRx Walgreens Prime. “This research examined adherence to these newer medications, the reasons for switching to these newer agents from existing medications to treat psoriasis, and the associated impact on the patient’s condition.”

For the study, researchers analyzed 5,215 records from a national specialty pharmacy database of patients prescribed any of three FDA-approved IL-17 inhibitors from January 2016 through December 2017. They also studied any prior biologic medication utilization in the preceding 12 months of IL-17 therapy initiation. Researchers followed the patients for 180 days after starting the newer IL-17 inhibitor.

Of the 5,215-study sample, 2,218 (42.5 percent) switched from a prior treatment. The most common reason for switching medications was “ineffective treatment” (64.7 percent).

“Patients who switched to the newer IL-17 inhibitor medications increased their adherence levels by 8.4 percent, and a large minority (45.7 percent) repeatedly reported improvement in their condition up to six months after switching,” says Francis Staskon, senior analyst for health analytics, research and reporting at Walgreens, and an analyst of the study.

According to Miller, providers may be comfortable with prescribing IL-17 inhibitors as a first line of treatment for psoriasis. “More than half of the patients included in the study (57.5 percent) initiated therapy on an IL-17 inhibitor – with 42.5 percent of the patients switching to an IL-17 inhibitor from a prior biologic medication.”

He adds: “Payers may see more of their members being prescribed IL-17 inhibitors and will need to determine the appropriate placement of these newer agents within their formulary.”

Researchers presented the above findings Sept. 11, at the National Association of Specialty Pharmacy seventh annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

About AllianceRx Walgreens Prime

AllianceRx Walgreens Prime (alliancerxwp.com) is a specialty and home delivery pharmacy that strives to provide exceptional care throughout a patient’s treatment journey with the medications they need every day. Formed in 2017 through a collaboration between Walgreens, one of the nation’s largest chain drug stores, and Prime Therapeutics, a leading pharmacy benefit manager, the company offers tools and

resources for patients, providers and health plans to deliver the optimal health outcomes. The company is headquartered in Orlando, Fla. and its pharmacies are accredited by several national pharmacy accreditation services.

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