**Additional file 1.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Characteristic | VAS pain>40 after 1 year | | VAS pain>40 after 2 years | | VAS pain>40 after 5 years | |
|  | **Present** | **Absent** | **Present** | **Absent** | **Present** | **Absent** |
| N (%) | 66 (30.1) | 153 (69.9) | 71 (34.1) | 137 (65.9) | 61 (34.1) | 118 (65.9) |
| Female, n (%) | 46 (69.7) | 109 (71.2) | 58 (81.7) | 88 (64.2) | 45 (73.8) | 82 (69.5) |
| Age, mean (SD), years | 60.1 (13.7) | 63.2 (13.5) | 56.7 (15.9) | 61.8 (14.0) | 60.0 (13.0) | 58.8 (15.3) |
| Symptom duration, months | 8.0 (6.0–10.3) | 7.0 (5.0–10.0) | 7.0 (5.0–10.0) | 7.0 (5.0–10.0) | 8.0 (6.0–10.0) | 7.0 (5.0–9.0) |
| RF positive, n (%) | 41 (62.1) | 94 (61.4) | 46 (64.8) | 79 (57.7) | 38 (62.3) | 77 (65.3) |
| Anti-CCP positive, n/N (%) | 40/61 (65.6) | 69/128 (53.9) | 36/62 (58.1) | 66/118 (55.9) | 30/55 (54.5) | 61/100 (61.0) |
| Prednisolone, n (%) | 29 (43.9) | 55 (35.9) | 32 (45.1) | 46 (33.6) | 24 (39.3) | 40 (33.9) |
| Methotrexate, n (%) | 33 (50.0) | 82 (53.6) | 37 (52.1) | 74 (54.0) | 30 (49.1) | 67 (56.8) |
| No DMARD, n (%) | 9 (13.6) | 29 (19.0) | 16 (22.5) | 19 (13.9) | 5 (8.2) | 22 (18.6) |
| Erosion, n (%) | 7 (10.6) | 27 (17.6) | 6 (8.5) | 25 (18.2) | 8 (13.1) | 23 (19.5) |
| Body Mass Index, mean (SD) | 25.5 (5.1)a | 25.4 (3.8)b | 25.5 (4.6)c | 25.6 (4.0)d | 25.2 (3.9)e | 25.4 (4.0)f |
| Current smoking, n/N (%) | 20/49 (40.8) | 33/106 (31.1) | 14/51 (27.5) | 33/96 (34.4) | 17/47 (36.2) | 22/76 (28.9) |
| Grip force, % of expected, mean (SD) | 33.8 (22.6)g | 41.0 (26.1)h | 33.8 (24.8)i | 41.7 (25.4)j | 34.2 (24.9)k | 40.4 (26.3)l |
| VAS pain, mean (SD) | 51.1 (23.6) | 37.4 (27.0) | 48.1 (23.7) | 36.7 (27.4) | 46.4 (24.4) | 37.5 (27.5) |
| DAS28, mean (SD) | 4.9 (1.3) | 4.6 (1.5) | 4.9 (1.5) | 4.5 (1.4) | 4.7 (1.2) | 4.6 (1.5) |
| SJC28 | 7.0 (4.0–10.0) | 7.0 (5.0–11.0) | 7.0 (4.0–11-0) | 7.0 (5.0–11.0) | 6.0 (4.0–8.0) | 7.5 (4.8–12.0) |
| TJC28 | 6.0 (3.0–11.0) | 3.0 (1.0–8.5) | 5.0 (3.0–10-0) | 3.0 (1.0–10.0) | 5.0 (2.0–8.0) | 4.0 (1.0–10.3) |
| HAQ | 1.0 (0.6–1.4) | 0.8 (0.3–1.1) | 1.0 (0.5–1.5) | 0.8 (0.3–1.1) | 0.8 (0.4–1.1) | 0.8 (0.3–1.3) |
| CRP (mg/l) | <9 (<9–22.0) | 10.0 (<9–30.0) | <9 (<9–32.0) | 9.0 (<9–24.0) | 9.0 (<9–17.5) | 10.0 (<9–32.5) |
| CRP>9 mg/l, n (%) | 33 (50.0) | 79 (51.6) | 33 (46.5) | 72 (52.6) | 31 (50.8) | 64 (54.2) |
| ESR (mm/h) | 19.5 (10.0–44.0) | 21.0 (10.0–41.5) | 19.0 (10.0–44.0) | 21.0 (10.0–43.0) | 19.0 (10.0–31.5) | 24.0 (11.0–47.8) |
| VAS PGA, mean (SD) | 50.7 (25.7) | 41.0 (27.0) | 50.5 (24.3) | 39.4 (27.5) | 51.0 (22.8) | 38.8 (27.7) |

Title: Baseline characteristics in early RA patients with or without unacceptable pain at follow-ups

Legend: Values are median (interquartile range) unless otherwise indicated. aData for body mass index in 48 cases. bData in 106 cases. cData in 51 cases. dData in 95 cases. eData in 46 cases. fData in 76 cases. gData for grip force in 55 cases. hData in 136 cases. iData in 63 cases. jData in 123 cases. kData in 59 cases. lData in 105 cases.  
VAS: visual analogue scale; SD: standard deviation; RF: rheumatoid factor; Anti-CCP: anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide; DMARD: disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drug; DAS28: disease activity score in 28 joints; SJC28: swollen joint count in 28 joints; TJC28: tender joint count in 28 joints; HAQ: health assessment questionnaire; CRP: C-reactive protein; ESR: erythrocyte sedimentation rate; PGA: patient global assessment.