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THE USE OF IMMUNOMODULATORY DRUGS FOR RECURRENT MULTIPLE MYELOMA: BRAZIL IN CONTRAST WITH THE WORLD

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INTRODUCTION

Immunomodulatory Thalidomide analogues utilized in Recurrent Multiple Myeloma, such as Lenalidomide and Pomalidomide have been discussed and widely tested recently. The use of Pomalidomide in combination with low-dose Dexamethasone in recurrent cases is described as highly effective and well tolerated, reaching a response rate of 74% in high-risk patients. Despite being accepted as a standard treatment for these cases in the United States and Europe for more than a decade, its use is not approved yet in Brazil. This study was conducted with the objective to evaluate current available scientific evidence and to measure the therapy risk-benefit ratio, considering particularly Brazilian population epidemiology.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A literature search was conducted using the following databases: EMBASE, MEDLINE, ScieLo, DataSUS and Web of Science. Recent publications were selected (2017-2020) and a critical reading was performed.

RESULTS

There is evidence that Pomalidomide has demonstrated better efficacy in comparison with Lenalidomide in terms of T-Cell count increase and activation. Furthermore, if administered in combination with Bortezomib and Dexamethasone, positive results are obtained, extending the need for the next cycle. Also, it presents low toxicity and no kidney excretion, which avoids constant dose adjustments. However, as well as Lenalidomide, it shows less effect in patients with soft-tissue plasmocytomas. It is known that MM is underdiagnosed in Brazil. Nevertheless, the estimated number of patients with MM that were followed-up on the Brazilian Public Health System over the last 8 years was 35,320. This disease lethality has increased over the last 5 years. Thus, we may conclude there is a national delay towards the possibility of use of new Immunomodulatory agents for MM.

CONCLUSION

Besides being underdiagnosed, MM in Brazil provides less treatment options. The use of new immunomodulatory drugs with proven scientific benefit seems to be an alternative for recurrent cases diagnosed in Brazil.

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