

Treatment of Class III/IV/V Lupus Nephritis

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- ❑ Overview of immunosuppressive Rx for severe LN
- ❑ Chinese/Asian data & ongoing studies
- ❑ Recent developments

Survival Analysis and Causes of Death

n = 230 Chinese lupus nephritis patients in HK

Follow-up 4076 pat-yr (17.7+/-8.9 yr)

24 deaths (10.4%) – 85% after 10 yrs of follow-up

Survival rates – [Renal Survival]

5-yr	98.6%	99.5%
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10-yr	98.2%	98.0%
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20-yr	90.5%	89.7%
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Causes of death - infection (50%), cardiovascular (20.8%), malignancy (12.5%)

SMR - ESRD 26.1, malignancy 12.9, cardiovascular 13.6

Severe Proliferative LN

Class III/IV \pm V

Treatments for Lupus Nephritis

Pre-1970 – corticosteroids alone; adverse effects+ & unsatisfactory efficacy

1970s – addition of cyclophosphamide improved renal outcome

1980s – iv cyclophosphamide pulses; sequential regimen

1990s to 2000s – mycophenolic acid

Now – corticosteroids + MPA or CTX then MPA or AZA; CNI; biologics & others ?

Induction Rx for Severe Prolif LN – why is *Remission* important?

Response to induction Rx → Long-term renal survival

Houssiau FA, et al. Arthritis Rheum 2004; 50: 3934-40
Chan TM, et al. Lupus 2005; 14: 265-72

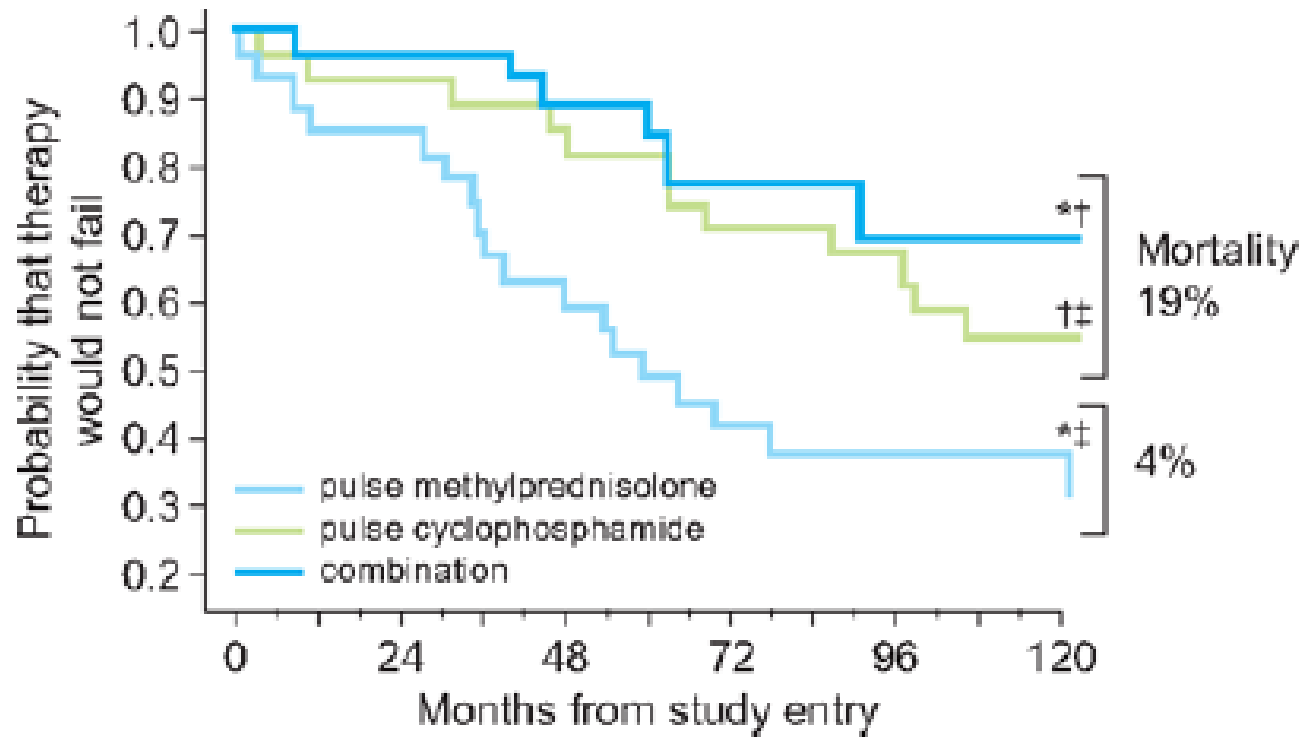
Remission → renal & patient survival

	<i>Renal survival</i>		<i>Patient survival</i>	
Remission	5-yr	10-yr	5-yr	10-yr
Yes	94%	94%	95%	95%
No	46%	31%	69%	60%

Korbet SM, et al. Am J Kidney Dis 2000; 35: 904-14

Results with iv CTX

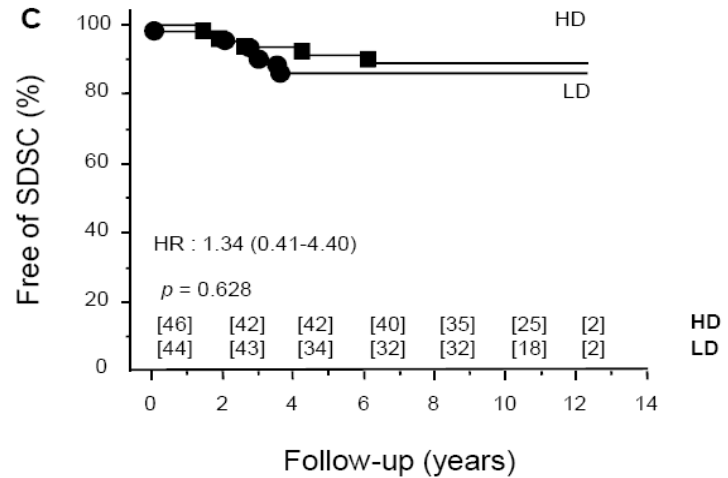
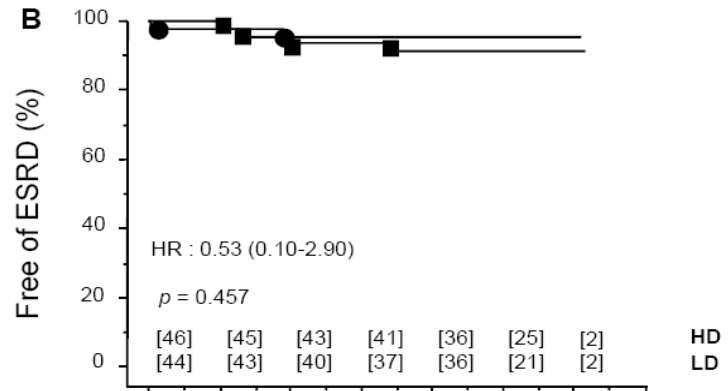
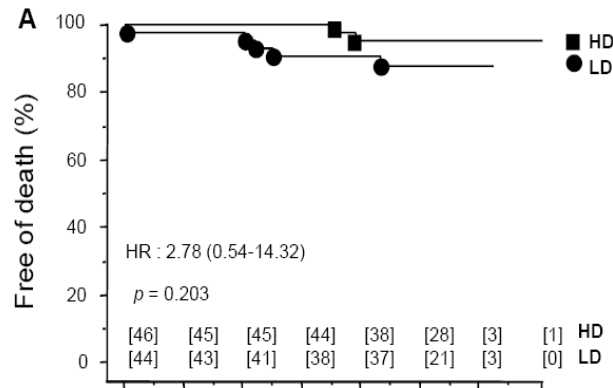
- ❑ Renal outcome better with ivCTX + Pred (vs Pred)
- ❑ Complete response 73/145; partial response 19/145; 41 (45%) renal relapse & 11 ESRF over 117 months
- ❑ Importance of maintenance immunosuppression
- ❑ '*Prolonged FU*' necessary to examine the impact of treatment on renal survival
- ❑ ↓adverse effects with iv CTX vs prolonged p.o., but still considerable
- ❑ Sub-optimal renal / patient survival *long-term*



Illei GG, et al. Ann Intern Med 2001; 135: 248-57

Euro-Lupus Study – 10-yr Data

n = 84 FU 115+/-30 months
 7 deaths
 6 ESRD



Euro-Lupus Treatment Regimen

CTX iv + pred

low dose (500 mg q2wk x6) vs high dose (6 q1m + 2 q3m)

followed by azathioprine

FU 41.3 months n = 90

Remission 71% vs 54%, p = n.s.

Infection seemed more frequent in high dose group

Similar efficacy

MMF vs CTX as Induction Rx for IV+/-V LN

	<i>n</i>	<i>endpoint</i>
Chan-HK	64	12 mon [MMF 2 g/d]
Hu-China	46	6 mon [MMF 1-1.5 g/d]
Ong-Malaysia	44	6 mon [MMF 2 g/d]
Ginzler-USA	140	6 mon [MMF 3 g/d; 63%; M 2.68 g/d]
ALMS	370	6 mon [MMF 3 g/d; M 2.6 g/d]

Chan TM, et al. N Engl J Med 2000; 343: 1156-62

Chan TM, et al. J Am Soc Nephrol 2005; 16: 1076-84

Hu W, et al. Chin Med J (Engl) 2002; 115: 705-9

Ong LM, et al. Nephrology 2005; 10: 504-510

Ginzler EM, et al. N Engl J Med 2005; 353: 2219-28

Appel GB, et al. J Am Soc Nephrol 2009; 20: 1103-12

Chan TM, in *Lupus Nephritis*, 2nd ed., Lewis EJ, Schwartz MM, Korbet SM, & Chan TM, Oxford University Press, 2010

Chan TM. Am J Med 2012; 125: 642-8

MMF in Class IV Lupus Nephritis

MMF (2 g/d) + Pred as induction therapy

→ high efficacy (CR >80%), *similar* to Pred+CTX

→ *fewer* adverse effects vs CTX (alopecia, amenorrhea, leukopenia, infection)

→ *better* QoL (rehabilitation)

Chan TM, et al. N Engl J Med 2000; 343: 1156-62

Chan TM, et al. J Am Soc Nephrol 2005; 16: 1076-84

Tse KC, et al. Lupus 2006; 15: 371-9

Yap DYH, et al. Rheumatology (Oxford) 2013; 52: 480-6

ALMS - Induction Phase Results

Response (endpoint): ↓ proteinuria & stable/improved creatinine

MMF dose achieved → mean 2.6 g/d median CTX 0.75 g/m²

1. response rate (*week 24*)

MMF 104/185 (56.2%) CTX 98/185 (53.0%) p=0.58

2. remission, proteinuria, creatinine – no significant difference

3. tolerability

- *CTX 40.6% more adverse events (episodes)*
- serious AE - MMF 27.7% & CTX 22.8%
- infection - MMF 12.0% & CTX 10.0%
- withdrawal due to AE - MMF 13.0% & CTX 7.2% (p=0.07)
- deaths - MMF 9 & CTX 5 (infections, 7 MMF deaths Asians)

ALMS - Induction Phase Data

<u>Response</u>	MMF	CTX	
Asian	53.2%	63.9%	
White	56.0%	54.2%	
Other	60.4%	38.5%	p=0.03
Black	53.9%	40.0%	
Hispanic	60.9%	38.8%	p=0.011
Latin American	60.7%	32.0%	p=0.003

Isenberg D, et al. Rheumatology 2010; 49: 128-40

Patients with very severe disease

Pooling data of patients with Class III/IV and –

✧ >15% crescents

✧ abnormal serum creatinine at presentation

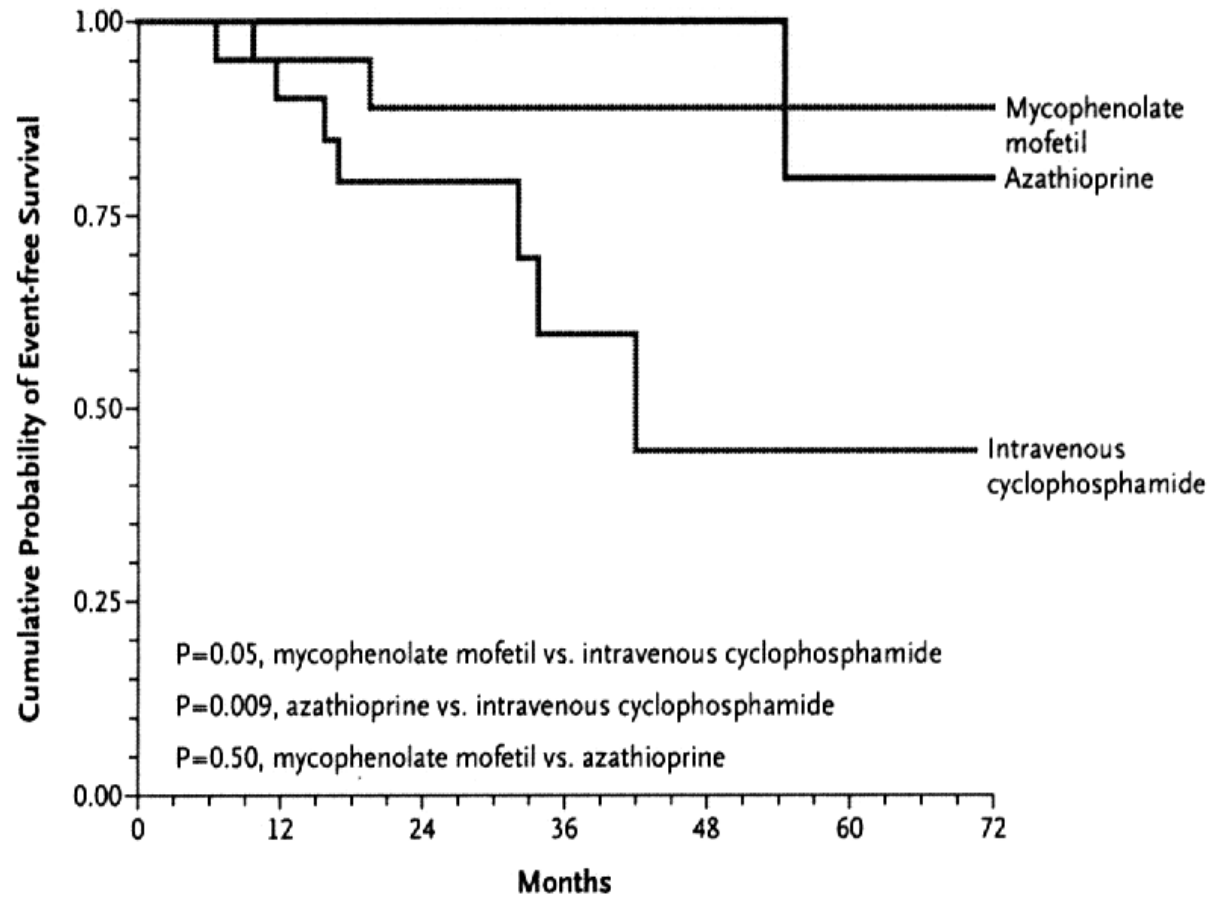
[ALMS, Chan, Ginzler, Mok, Hooi, ...]

Findings -

Pred + CTX / MMF – similar early response

CTX ⇒ ? fewer disease flares and less renal failure

Maintenance Immunosuppression



No. at Risk

Azathioprine	19	19	15	10	9	4	2
Intravenous cyclophosphamide	20	19	12	6	3	2	1
Mycophenolate mofetil	20	20	14	11	6	2	2

MMF vs AZA as Maintenance Rx of Lupus Nephritis - MAINTAIN Trial

N=105 III/IV +/-V

Euro-Lupus induction immunosuppression

Maintenance from Wk12 with steroid +
AZA (2 mg/kg/d, n=52) or MMF (2 g/d, n=53)

Median FU 53 months (24 drop-outs):

1. renal flare in 13 AZA patient and 9 MMF patient
2. AZA vs MMF *similar* → time to flare (renal or systemic); renal remission; infection
3. cytopenia more with AZA
4. doubling of baseline creatinine - 4 AZA and 3 MMF

Aspreva Lupus Management Study (ALMS)

III, IV, V or mixture

Induction (n=370) → MMF (3 g/d) vs iv CTX (1 g/m²) q4wk
+ steroid (up to 60 mg/d)

Responders re-randomized at Week 24 (n=227)

→ MMF 1 g bid (n=116) or AZA 2 mg/kg/d (n=111) + steroid

Maintenance phase lasted 36 months

Outcome: Time to 'treatment failure' [death, ESRD, doubling of baseline creatinine, renal flare, rescue therapy]

Result [55.9% completed the study]

MMF regimen better than AZA

❑ 'time to treatment failure' – HR 0.44, CI 0.25-0.77, P=0.003

❑ 'time to renal flare' – HR 0.50, CI 0.26-0.93, P=0.03

❑ 'time to rescue therapy' – HR 0.39, CI 0.18-0.87, P=0.02

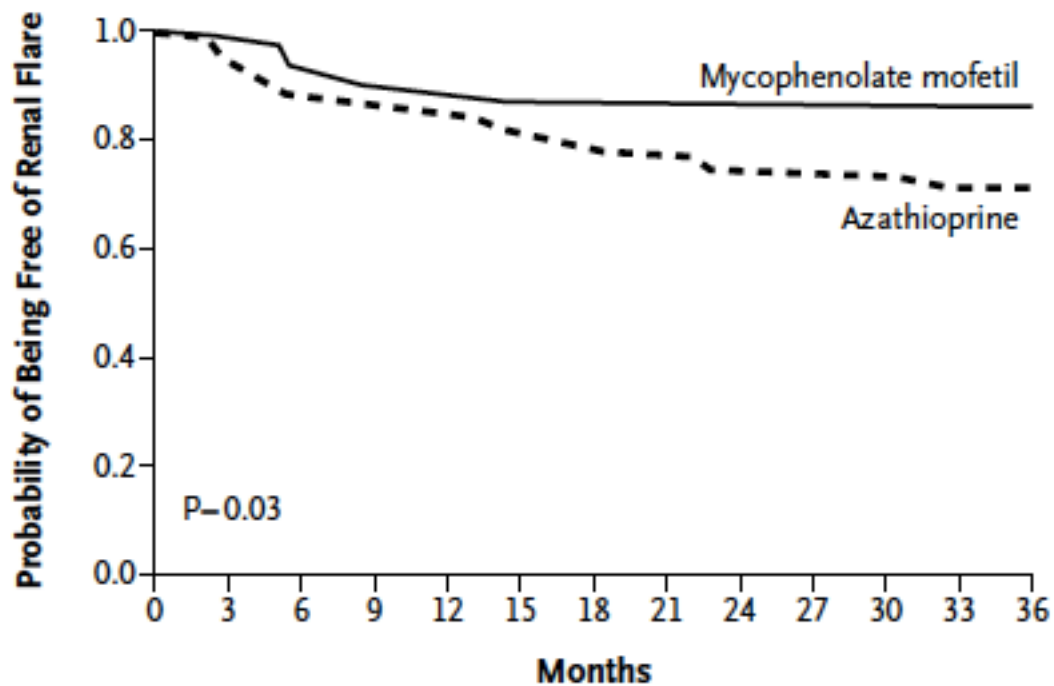
■ 'treatment failure' - 16.4% [MMF] vs 32.4% [AZA]

■ renal flare - 12.9% [MMF] vs 23.4% [AZA]

■ rescue treatment - 7.8% [MMF] vs 17.1% [AZA]

■ withdrawal due to adverse events more with AZA
(39.6% vs 25.2%, P=0.02)

B



No. at Risk

Mycophenolate mofetil	116	109	102	92	89	88	82	80	78	75	74	73
Azathioprine	111	101	89	82	77	71	65	62	60	58	56	54

Long-term Results with Pred+MMF in LN

65 patients with Class III/IV+/-V LN FU 92+/-48 months

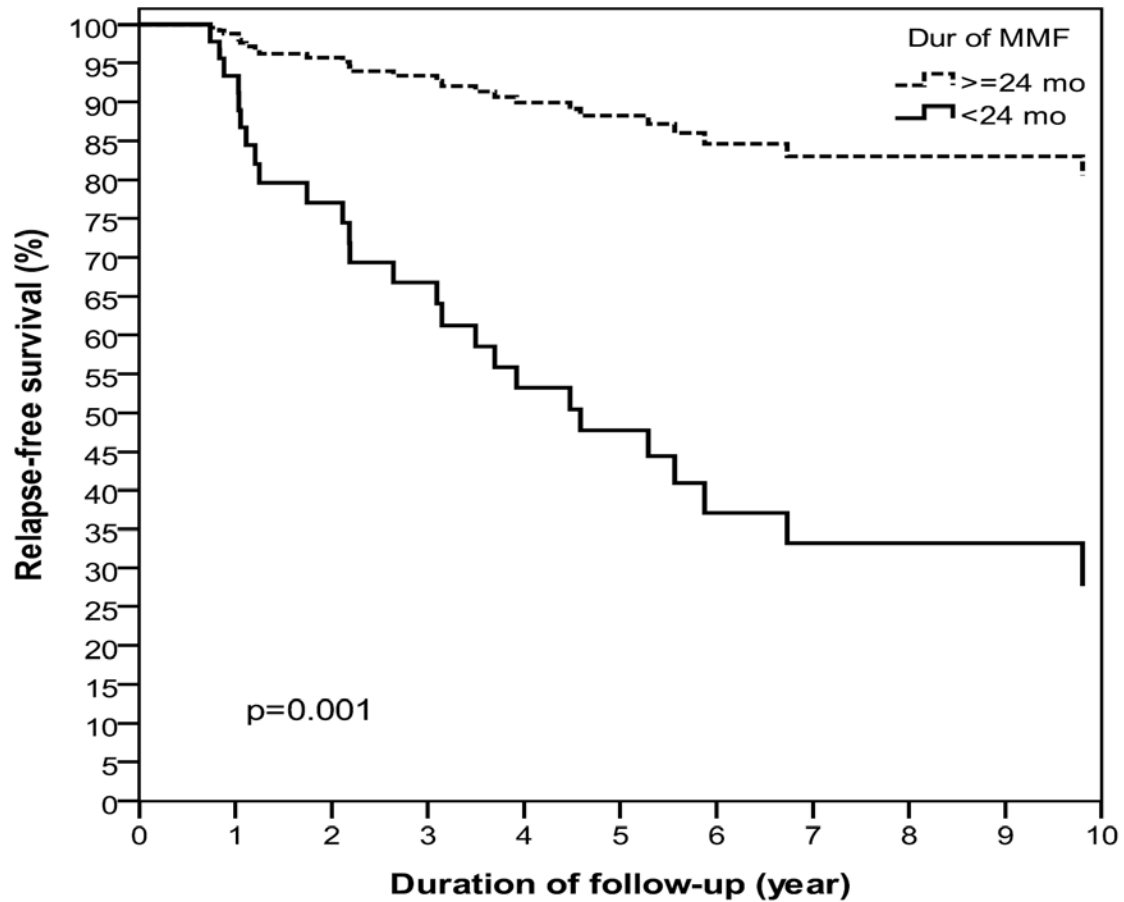
- Treated with Pred+MMF continuously from the early (induction) phase to the maintenance phase
- MMF → AZA and/or CNI in 34 patients

10-yr	patient survival	renal survival
	91%	86%

Relapse-free survival at 5-yr

MMF-MMF	76%
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MMF-AZA	56%
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Survival % (no. at risk)

MMF ≥ 24 mo 100% (28)

88% (15)

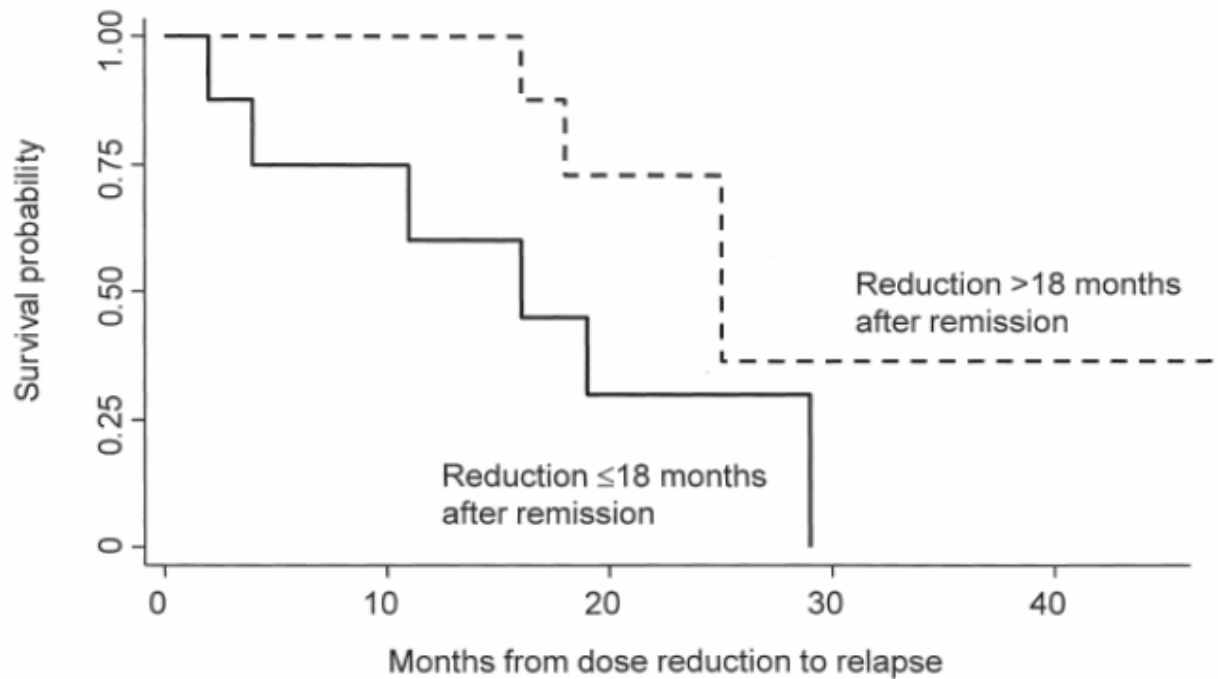
81% (1)

MMF < 24 mo 100% (37)

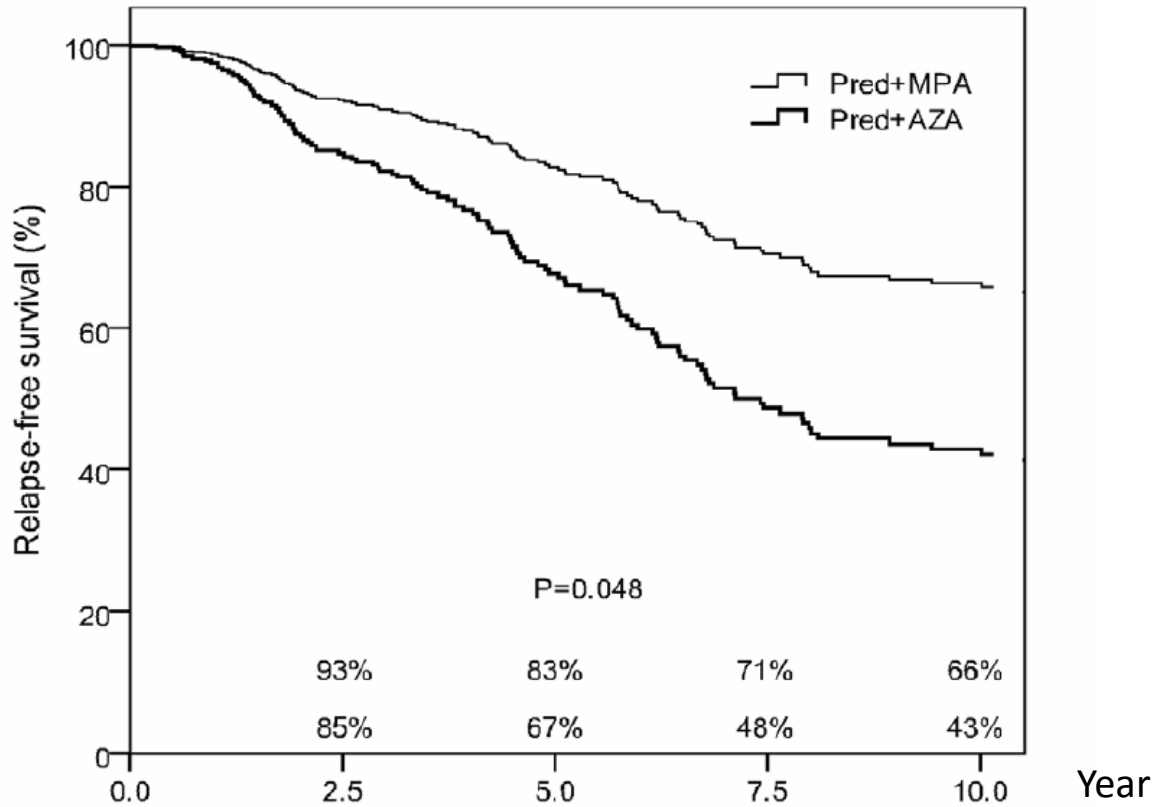
48% (12)

28% (3)

Reducing MMF dose within 18 months after treatment response → 6-fold increase in risk of relapse (p=0.001)



N=184 FU 195+/-94 months



Yap DYH, et al. Unpublished data.

Rx of Class III/IV±V LN

Induction – Pred (?MP) + MMF/CTX/?CNI

Maintenance – pred + MMF/AZA/?CNI [+hydroxychloroquine]

Non-immunological → renal & vascular outcomes, ...

Membranous LN

Class V

Treatment of Membranous Lupus Nephritis

randomized controlled trial

Response Rate at 1 yr –

steroid alone	27%
cyclophosphamide	60%
cyclosporine	84%

Effect of Immunosuppressive Treatment in Membranous Lupus Nephritis

meta-analysis of 21 studies

Response rate –

steroid alone <60%

other immunosuppressive agents 83%

[AZA 89%, CTX 77%, MMF 84%, CYA 84%]

Non-response rate –

steroid alone 39%

other immunosuppressive agents 17%

MMF vs CTX as Induction Treatment in Membranous Lupus Nephritis

pooled data from two studies 33 MMF vs 32 IVC

similar efficacy at 24 wk

Study	Group	N	Urine protein (g/24 h)	Serum creatinine (μmol/l)	Serum albumin (g/l)	Serum C3 (g/l)	Serum C4 (g/l)	Anti-dsDNA	Nephrotic (%)	Use of RAASI (%)	% Change in urine protein	% Change in serum creatinine
US	MMF	8	1.5 ± 1.1, P=0.007	79 ± 9, P=0.026	34 ± 6	129 ± 37	36 ± 11	0.1 ± 0.3	0	62.5	-61 ± 29	16 ± 18
	IVC	7	1.6 ± 1, P=0.046	66 ± 25, P=0.283	34 ± 4	130 ± 35	27 ± 15	0.6 ± 1	0	71	-71 ± 21	9 ± 18
ALMS	MMF	25	1.8 ± 2, P<0.001	63 ± 21, P=0.073	36 ± 8	111 ± 37	30 ± 17	0.4 ± 0.7	12	80	-63 ± 29	-6 ± 22
	IVC	25	2.7 ± 2.4, P=0.001	71 ± 32, P=0.539	34 ± 3	71 ± 33	22 ± 12	1 ± 1.1	32	76	-48 ± 51	3 ± 23

17 MMF & 23 IVC nephrotic → responder 11/17 vs 14/23

Pred+Tac vs Pred+MMF in LN V with Nephrotic Syndrome

prospective randomized pilot study with 16 patients

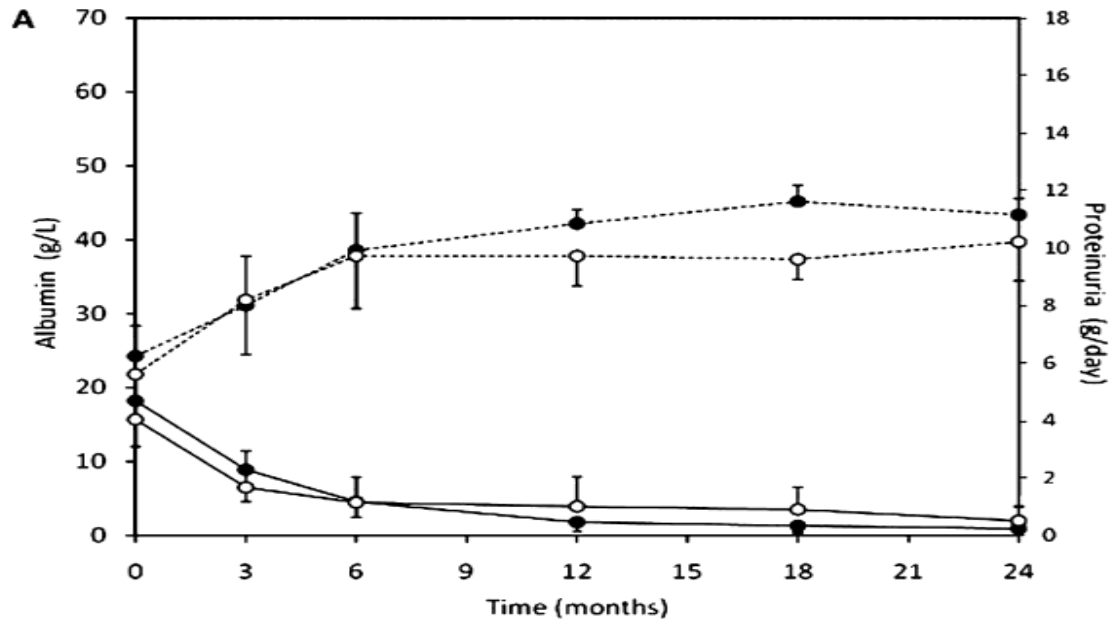
[MMF 7, Tac 9] FU 24 months

proteinuria 4.7 & 4 g/d at baseline

MMF 0.75-1 g bid Tac trough level 6-8 ng/mL

Pred+Tac vs Pred+MMF in LN V with Nephrotic Syndrome

Response rate 55.6% vs 71.4% P=0.515



ACR & EULAR Guidelines for Class V LN

⇒ Nephrotic → pred + MMF (2-3 g/D)

Rx of Class V LN

Significant proteinuria → immunosuppression

Pred + MMF / CTX / (AZA) / CNI

Recent Developments

Emerging Therapies

Calcineurin Inhibitors (CNI)

- cyclosporine, tacrolimus, ...
- effective immunosuppression (T lymphocyte)
- standard immunosuppressive therapy in kidney transplantation \Rightarrow corticosteroids + CNI + MPA
- reduce proteinuria (effect on podocyte) \rightarrow efficacy in MN, FSGS, relapsing MCD

CyA vs ivCTX Induction Rx in III/IV LN (CYCLOFA-LUNE)

Pred+CyA (19) vs Pred+ivCTX (21) III/IV FU 9+9 months
activity 9.3/9.9 chronicity 3.5/4.0 UP 3.8/2.5 g/D

CTX – 10 mg/kg q3wk x2, q4wk x4, q6wk x2

CyA – 4-5 mg/kg/D for 9 m then reduce

Drop-outs: ind phase – 1 CTX & 1 CyA; maint phase – 3 CTX

Response (9 mon): 11/21 CTX vs 8/19 CyA, p=0.75

Response (18 mon): 8 vs 11, p=0.21

38 patients median FU 7.7 yr

CTX vs CyA similar → creat, UP, renal failure, SLICC
damage score, adverse events

Zavada J, et al. Lupus 2010; 19: 1281-1289

Zavada J, et al. Lupus 2014; 23: 69-74

Tacrolimus vs ivCTX as Induction Rx in III/IV LN

Pred+Tac (42) vs Pred+ivCTX (39)

III/IV+/-V V (11%)

Tac trough blood level 5-10 ng/mL

6-month outcome –

CR 52.4% vs 38.5% P=0.2

Response 90.5% vs 82.1% P=0.7

Tac → lower proteinuria level after 1 mon

Adverse effects less frequent in Tac group

Tac ≈ esp useful for class V

Pred+Tac vs Pred+MMF as Induction Rx

open-label randomized prospective controlled trial

induction Rx 6 mon III / IV / V (pure V 19%)

responders maintained with pred+AZA

Tac (n=74) dose not guided by TDM (started with 0.1 mg/kg/D)

MMF (n=76) dose could go up to 3 g/D

achieved Tac trough $7.8 \pm 3.9 \mu\text{g/L}$

Table 3 Overall renal response at month 6

Renal response at month 6	MMF (N=76)	TAC (N=74)	Difference (95% CI)*	p Value
CR	45 (59%)	46 (62%)	3% (-12% to 18%)	0.71
PR	16 (21%)	20 (27%)	6% (-8% to 19%)	
NR	15 (20%)	8 (11%)	-9% (-20% to 3%)	
CR (ACR)†	8 (11%)	10 (14%)	3% (-8% to 14%)	0.59

*With reference to MMF.

†Definition: creatinine clearance ≥ 90 mL/min+urine protein/creatinine <0.2 +inactive urinary casts.

ACR, American College of Rheumatology; CR, complete response; MMF, mycophenolate mofetil; NR, no response; PR, partial response; TAC, tacrolimus.

CrCl did not change in Tac group but improved in MMF group

Tac resulted in numerically higher response rate than MMF in Class V

One death (infection), more zoster (18% vs 3%) and diarrhea in MMF group

**Some patients in Tac group had reversible SCr increase by 30%

Pred+Tac vs Pred+MMF in Nephrotic Class V LN

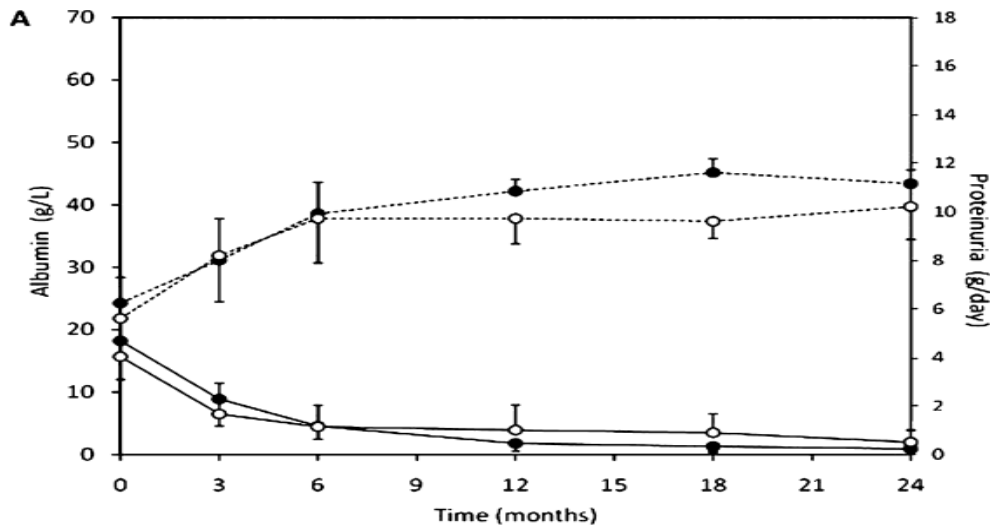
prospective randomized pilot study with 16 patients

[MMF 7, Tac 9] FU 24 months

proteinuria 4.7 & 4 g/d at baseline

MMF 0.75-1 g bid, Tac trough level 6-8 ng/mL

Response rate 71.4% vs 55.6% P=0.515



Pred+MMF+Tac as Induction Rx for IV+V LN

MP-Pred+MMF+Tac (20) vs MP-Pred+ivCTX (20)

Tac trough blood level 5-7 ng/mL

MMF 0.5 g bid, MPA AUC_{0-12h} 20-45 mg.h/L

Treatment duration 6-9 months

Outcome –

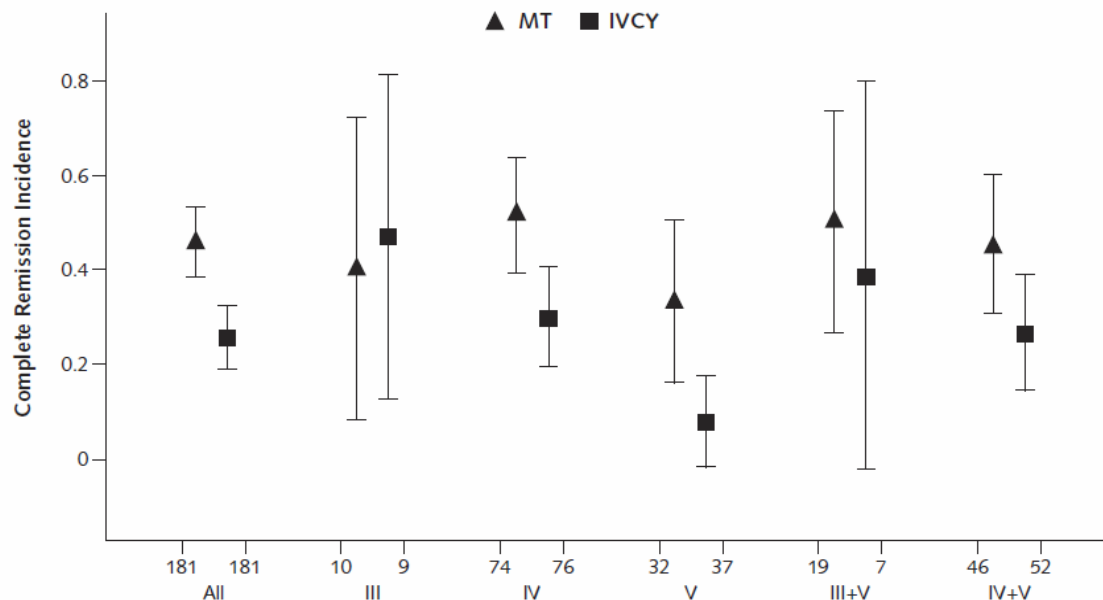
CR/PR	MT	Pred+ivCTX
6-mon	50%/40%	5%/40%
9-mon	65%/30%	15%/40%

Triple regimen better tolerated than Pred+ivCTX

Pred+ MMF+Tac vs ivCTX as Induction Rx for III/IV/V LN

Tac 4 mg/D, MMF 0.5 g bid vs ivCTX 0.75 g/m² q4wk for 6 mon
ivMP 0.5 g/D for 3 days creat \leq 265.2 micromol/L

1° Endpoint : CR after 24 wks of treatment – MT superior (45.9% vs 25.6%, p<0.001) [response 83.5% vs 63.0%, p<0.001]



368 randomized

24 lost to FU

28 discount assigned Rx

Serious AE

MT 7.2% vs CTX 2.8%

AE related drop-out

MT 5.5% vs CTX 1.7%

Tacrolimus vs AZA as Maintenance Rx in III/IV LN

70 patients with III/IV+/-/IV after response to induction Rx

Pred+Tac (34) vs Pred+AZA (36)

Tac trough blood level 4-6 ng/mL AZA 2 mg/kg/D

6-month outcome

renal flare - 2 in AZA group, none in Tac

AZA asso with leukopenia and liver abnormality

Long-term Data on Tac in LN

retrospective Tac treatment >6 mon target trough 4-6 $\mu\text{g/L}$

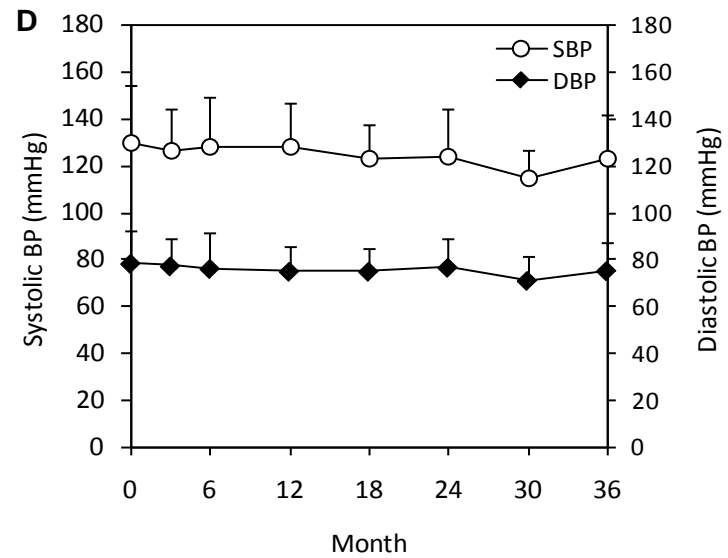
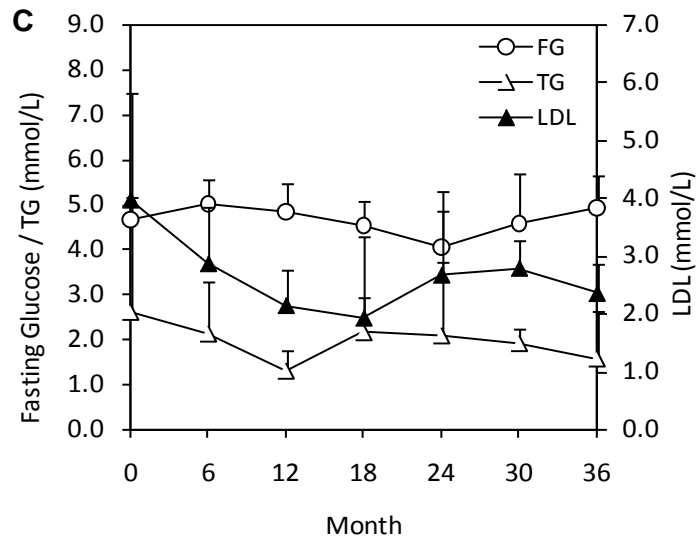
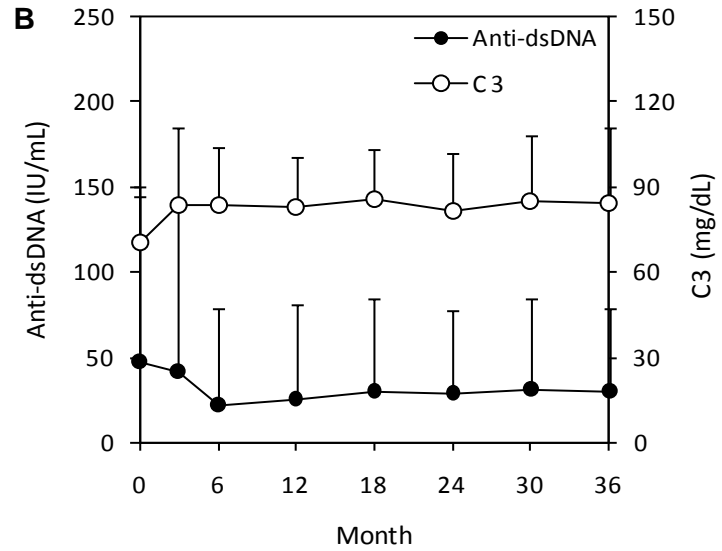
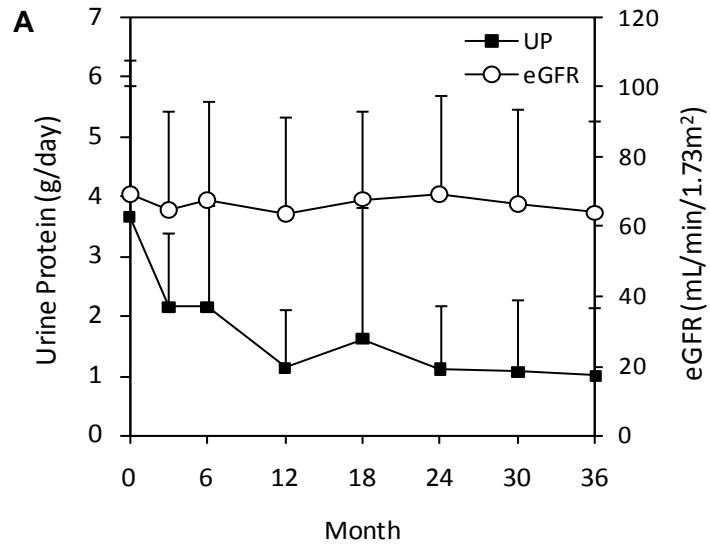
N=29 [41.2 \pm 9.2 yr; 24F 5M]

17 III/IV \pm V \rightarrow Tac added to pred+MMF

10 V \rightarrow Pred+Tac 2 relapsing podocytopathy

Tac duration 46.9 \pm 37.9 mon [18(62.1%) >36 mon]

<i>Tac</i>	<u>6 mon</u>	<u>12 mon</u>
Dose	3.39 \pm 1.91	3.41 \pm 1.72 mg/D
Trough	4.72 \pm 2.9	4.17 \pm 1.91 $\mu\text{g/L}$



Long-term Data on Tac in LN

Renal Response –

Complete UP ≤ 0.5 g/D, creat $\pm 15\%$ of baseline

Partial UP \downarrow by 50%, non-nephrotic, stable creat

<i>Response rate</i>	<u><i>Complete</i></u>	<u><i>Partial</i></u>
Class III/IV \pm V	40%	26.7% [12-mon]
	46.7%	33.3% [24-mon]
Class V	30%	30%
	50%	40%

37.9% had UP \downarrow by 50% after 6 months of Tac

Biologics

- ❑ anti-CD20
- ❑ atacicept
- ❑ abatacept
- ❑ belimumab
- ❑ Others – e.g. PKC inhibitors

- Importance of Proteinuria response to treatment
- What level of Proteinuria should one target

CSG Data

Remission achieved ?

YES ⇒ renal & patient survival >90%

NO ⇒ renal survival 46% / 31% at 5 / 10 years
patient survival 69% / 60% at 5 / 10 years

Korbet SM, et al. Am J Kid Dis 2000; 35: 904–14

Proteinuria reduced by 50% or more after Rx for 6 months ?

YES ⇒ 5- / 10-yr ESRF rate 15% / 26%

NO ⇒ 5- / 10-yr ESRF rate 41% / 50%

Korbet SM, et al. Nephrol Dial Transplant 2013; 28: 2313–8

ALMS Data

baseline eGFR <30mls/min \Rightarrow worse renal prognosis

C3 normalize / \downarrow proteinuria of >25% by 8 weeks \Rightarrow favorable outcome

Dall'Era M, et al. Arthritis Care Res 2011; 63: 351–7

Treatment response and Long-term outcome

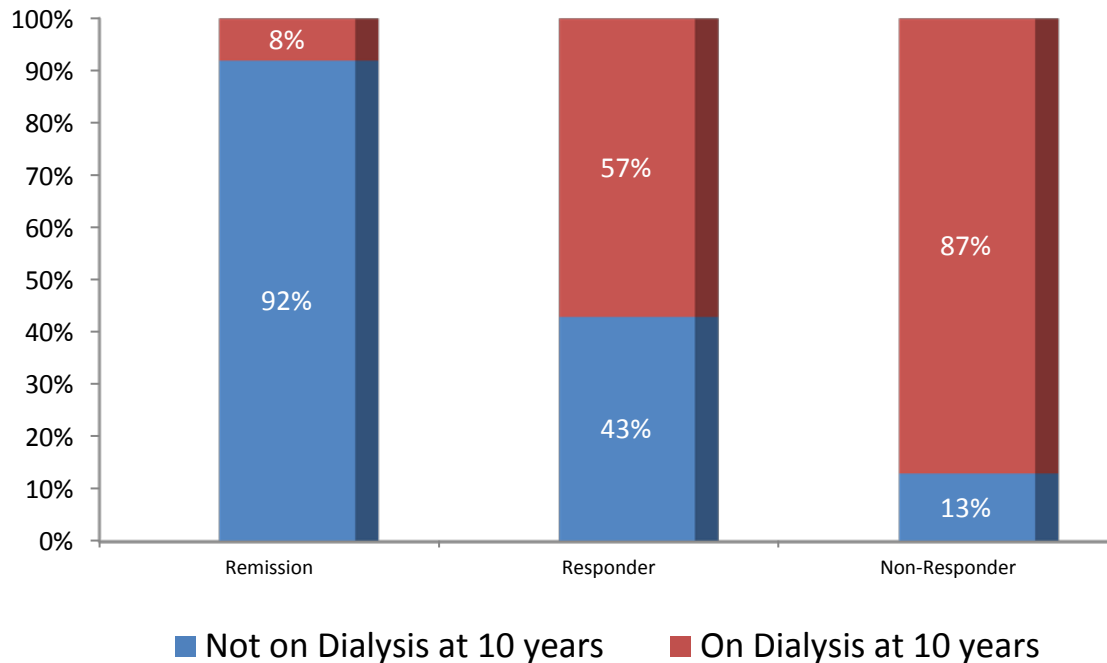


Diagram courtesy of
N Solomon, Aurinia Pharm

ELNT & MAINTAIN Data

Follow-up (MAINTAIN): 110 months (median) [range 18-156 mon]

↓Proteinuria more rapid ⇒ better long-term renal prognosis

↓Proteinuria alone (vs creat vs creat+uRBC) drives PPV of 12-mon treatment response on 10-yr renal prognosis – 92% (vs 94% vs 93%)

Proteinuria at 12-mon –

<0.8 g/D (ELNT) → good long-term renal outcome
(defined as 7-yr creat \leq 1 mg/dL)
[sens 81%; spec 78%]

<0.7 g/D (MAINTAIN) → good long-term renal outcome
[sens 71%; spec 75%; PPV 94%; NPV 29%]

Dall'Era M, et al. Arthritis Rheumatol 2015; 67: 1305-13

Tamirou F, et al. Ann Rheum Dis 2015, in press

Tamirou F, et al. Lupus Sci Med 2015, in press

↓IgG and Infection in LN Patients

Pre-mature termination of APRIL LN Study 28113
after three of four atacicept-treated patients
showed IgG <3 g/L, with pneumonia/bacteraemia
affecting two patients

Ginzler EM, et al. Arthritis Res Ther 2012; 14: R33

Pred+MMF Does Not Lead to ↓↓IgG in LN Patients

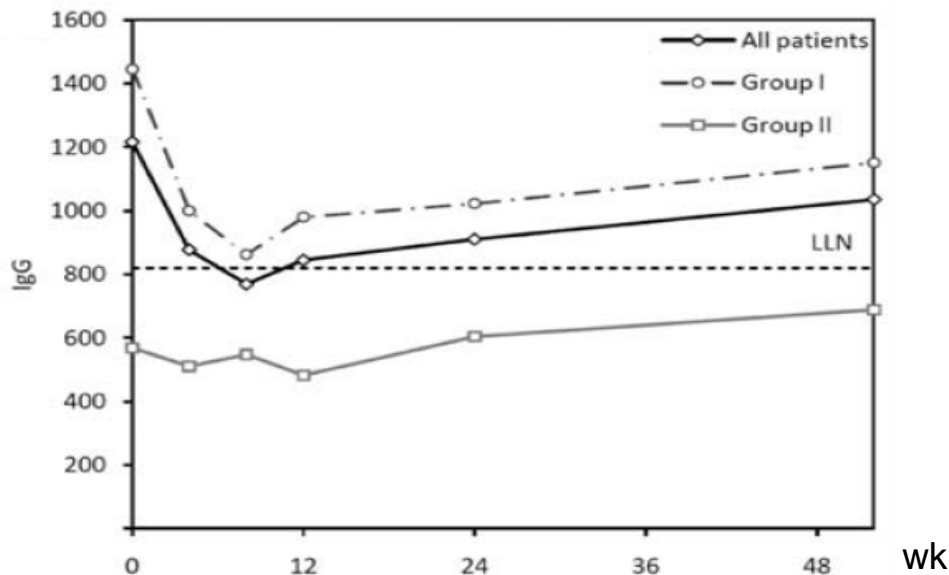
N=46 26.1% had low IgG level at baseline (none below 3 g/L)

Low IgG level asso with heavier proteinuria (6.8 vs 4.4 g/D)

After Rx ⇒ ↓IgG level after 2 wks, trough at 8 wks, then increase

One patient had IgG <3 g/L after Rx

5/12 infections asso ↓IgG (RR 1.863, CI 0.466-6.818, p=0.28)



Yap DYH, et al.

Lupus 2014; 23: 678-83

MPA Therapeutic Drug Monitoring

MPA Therapeutic Drug Monitoring in LN Treatment

- MPA pharmacokinetics vary between patients
- MMF (not EC-MPS) → relatively good correlation between trough (other single time-point) MPA level and AUC
- Drug exposure ~more related to efficacy than adverse events
- [SLE/Vasculitis] AUC 35-45 mg.h/L or Trough MPA 3.5-4.5 mg/L \cong favorable clinical outcome [MMF dose approx 1.8 g/D]; Trough MPA 3 mg/L → 92% NPV for flare

de Winter BC, et al. Ther Drug Monit 2009; 31: 585-91

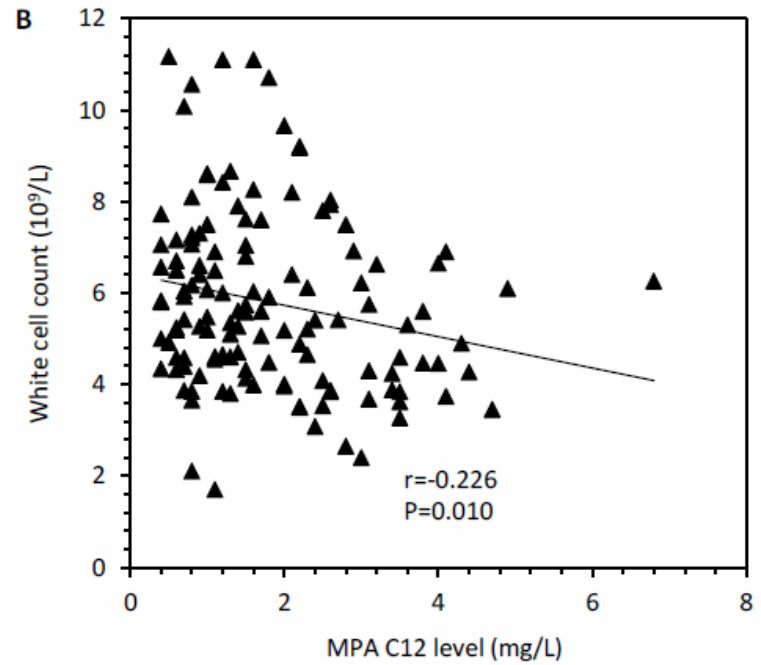
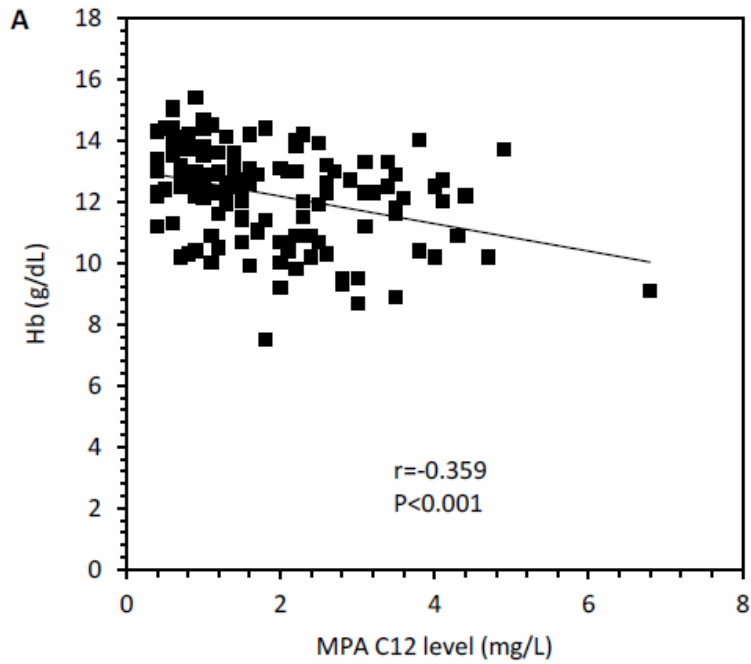
Weber LT, et al. J Am Soc Nephrol 2002; 13: 759-68

Neumann I, et al. Nephrol Dial Transplant 2008; 23: 3514-20

Zahr N, et al. Arthritis Rheum 2010; 62: 2047-54

Djabarouti S, et al. Arthritis Res Ther 2010; 12: R217

Lertdumrongluk P, et al. Kidney Int 2010; 78: 389-95



Yap DYH, et al. Unpublished data.

Concentration-controlled MPA Treatment Regimen

N=19, III/IV MMF dose commenced at 1.5 g/D

Target MPA-C1 >13 mg/L

Response rate –

24 Wk 17/19 (89%) [4 CR]

48 Wk 8 CR

78% achieved MPA-AUC_{0-12h} target 45 mg.h/L

Required MMF dose \Rightarrow ≥ 2 g/D in 83.3%

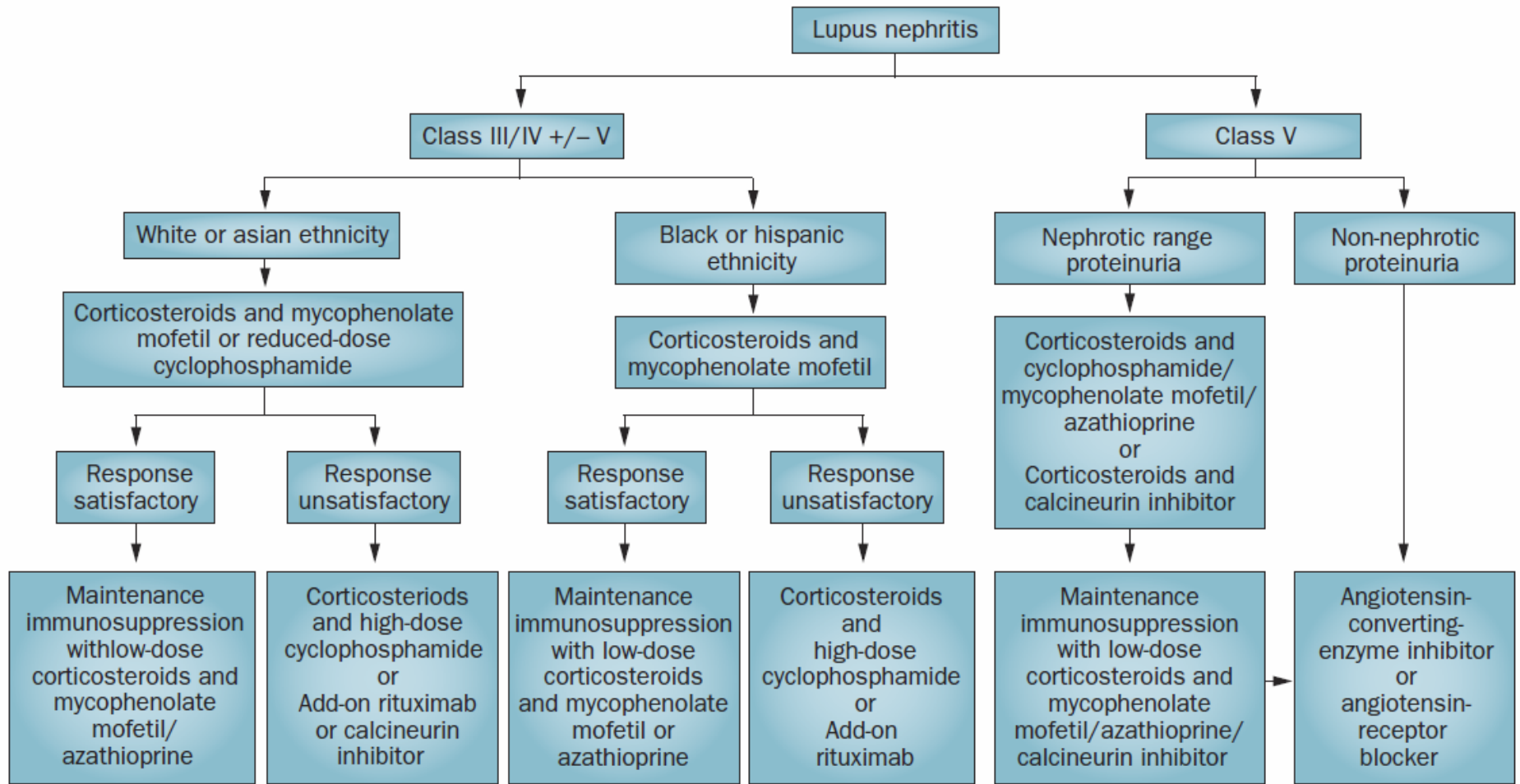
Lertdumrongluk P, et al. *Kidney Int* 2010; 78: 389-95

Kittanamongkolchai W, et al. *Lupus* 2013; 22: 727-32

Treatment of Lupus Nephritis

Then : corticosteroids → corticosteroids + CTX;
suboptimal efficacy; morbidities; unsatisfactory long-term
outcomes

Now : corticosteroids + MPA or CTX then MPA or AZA;
additional choices e.g. CNI & biologics etc; ↓ dependency
on corticosteroids; individualization



Thank you

