

Auto immune hepatitis

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21 t/m 23 juni a.s. zal de Dutch (Flamish) Liver Week plaatsvinden
in Hampshire Hotel Fitland Leiden

Structure

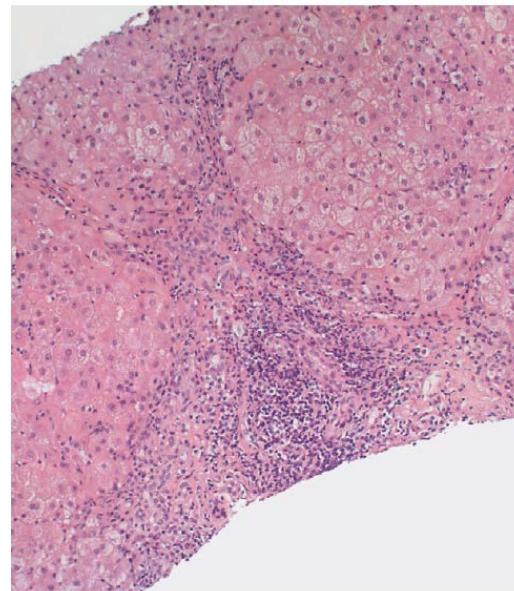
- Case / clinical presentation
- Diagnosis
- Epidemiology
- Histology
- Genetics
- Natural course
- Treatment
 - When, how, what, stop
- Conclusion
- And of course.....Multiple choice questions

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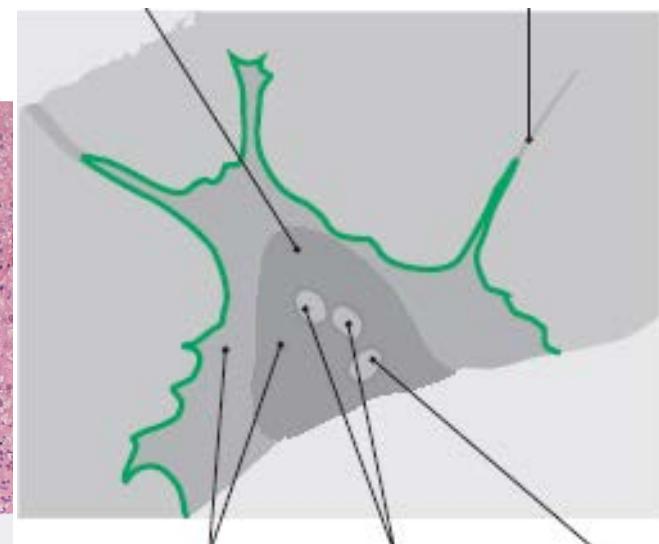
- A 18 yr-old female presents with malaise, fatigue, and myalgias. She mentions that her stools are lighter color than normal. Physical examination is remarkable for jaundice and a liver edge 2 finger breaths below the right costal margin. Her laboratory evaluation reveals a total bilirubin of 224 umol/L, ALAT of 3124 U/L, and an INR of 1.4. You think of autoimmune hepatitis. Which laboratory test is appropriate?
 - A. Antinuclear (ANA) and antismooth muscle antibodies (ASMA)
 - B. Antimitochondrial antibodies (AMA) and total lipid profile
 - C. Antibodies to soluble liver antigen (SLA)
 - D. Serum IgM
 - E. Anti liver-kidney-microsomal (LKM-1) antibodies

Case

- 35-year-old female
- **History**
 - Fatigued, malaise, weight loss 2 kg / 2 months
- **Laboratory**
 - ESR 107 mm/1st hr IgG 50 g/L; ALP 734 IU/L, ALT 533 IU/L; AST 583 IU/L↑; Bil tot. 30 umol/L; GGT 385 IU/L
- **Auto immune serology**
 - ASM (1: 120) ANA (1: 360)
- **Histology**
 - Interface hepatitis
 - Piece meal necrosis



Portal triad Septum formation



Interface hepatitis Bile ducts

Clinical Presentation of AIH

Clinical picture

- Histology
 - interface hepatitis with plasma cells / lymphocytes
 - Lobular or panacinar necrosis
- Laboratory
 - Predominant aminotransferase elevation
 - Autoantibodies
 - Hypergammaglobulinemia
- Exclusion of other chronic diseases (viral hepatitis)
 - Diagnosis is based on four major criteria:
elevated IgG levels (or total gamma globulins)
characteristic autoantibodies
histological features of hepatitis
absence of viral hepatitis
 - Response to immunosuppression is characteristic and supports the diagnosis

AIH simplified diagnostic criteria

Work-up (in context of elevated ALT)

- Autoantibodies
- IgG
- Liver biopsy
- Virus serology

		Points
Autoantibodies	ANA or SMA or LKM >1:40	1
	ANA or SMA or LKM >1:80	2
	SLA/LP Positive (>20 units)	
IgG (or gamma-globulius)	Upper normal limit	1
	>1.10 times normal limit	2
Liver histology*	Compatible with AIH	1
	Typical for AIH	2
Absence of viral hepatitis	Yes	2
	No	0

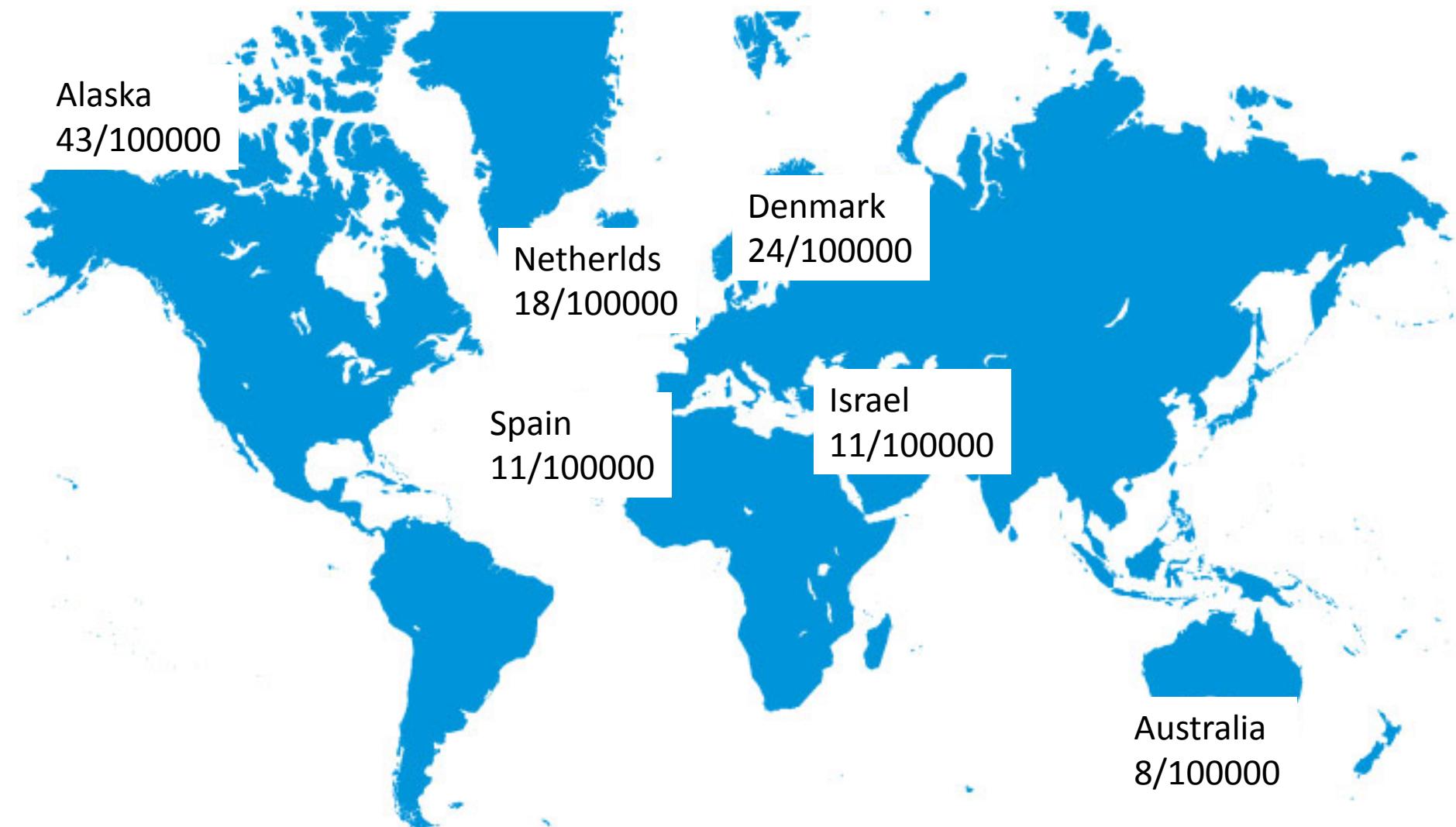
≥ 6 probable AIH; ≥7 definite AIH

AIH classification

autoantibodies based

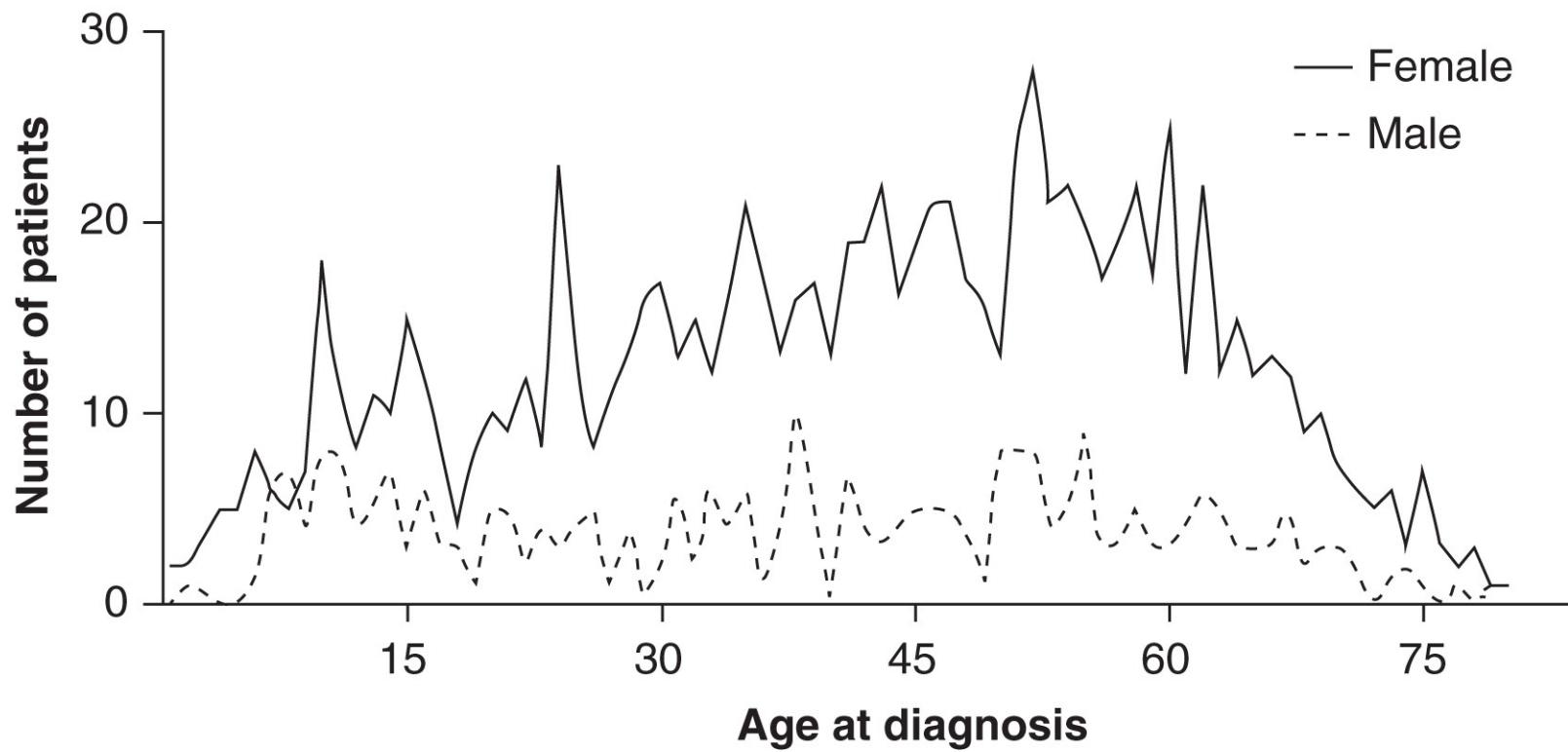
AIH type	Autoantibodies	Specifics
1	ANA; SMA	-80% of cases -adults -slow onset
2	LKM1 LKM3; LC1	-20% of cases -pediatric -fulminant cases
3	SLA/LP	similar to type 1 -more relapse -more difficult to treat

Global AIH prevalence



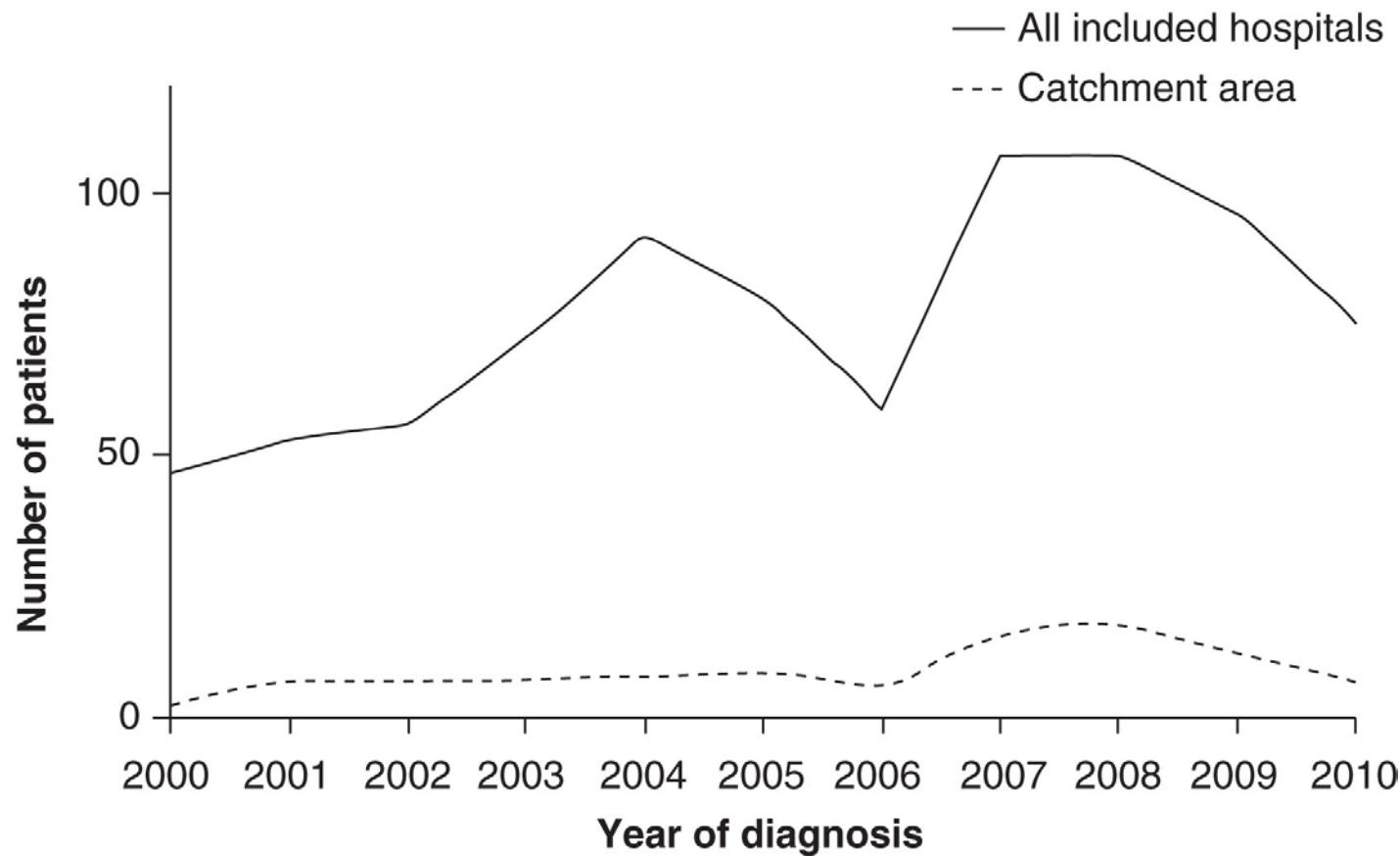
Prevalence of AIH in Europe is 15-25/100.000 inhabitants and is increasing in both women and men

Age at diagnosis of AIH



AIH Incidence:

Dutch nation wide study



1313 AIH patients (78% females)

Prevalence 18.3/100.000 (95% CI 17.3–19.4)

Annual incidence 1.1/100.000 (95% CI: 0.5–2)

2

- Which diagnostic procedure is a requirement to diagnose autoimmune hepatitis
 1. Ultrasound
 2. Liver biopsy
 3. Magnetic cholangiopancreaticography
 4. Fibroscan

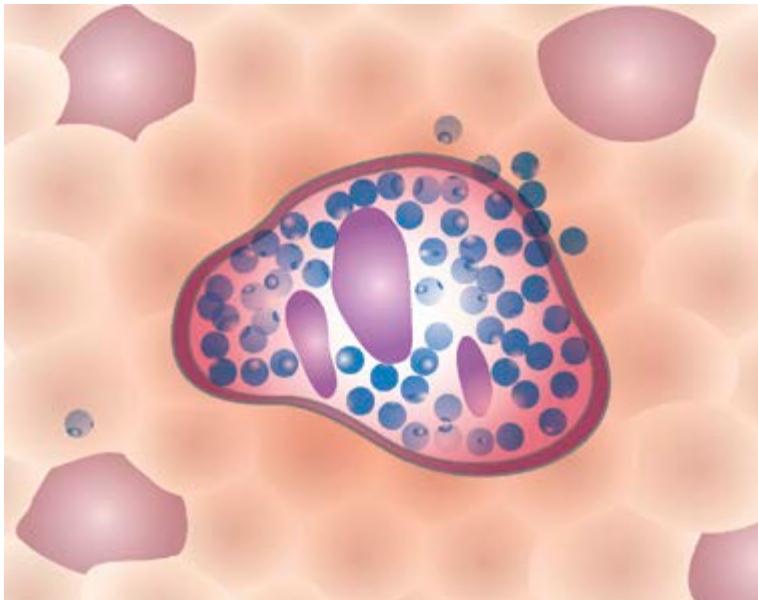
Role of Liver biopsy

- Liver biopsy is a prerequisite for the diagnosis of AIH
- Essential to make or refute diagnosis
- Provides information on prognosis and management
- Excludes other liver diseases (NASH)
- Findings must be compatible rather than typical
- Best measure of disease activity
- Not necessary to confirm the relapse

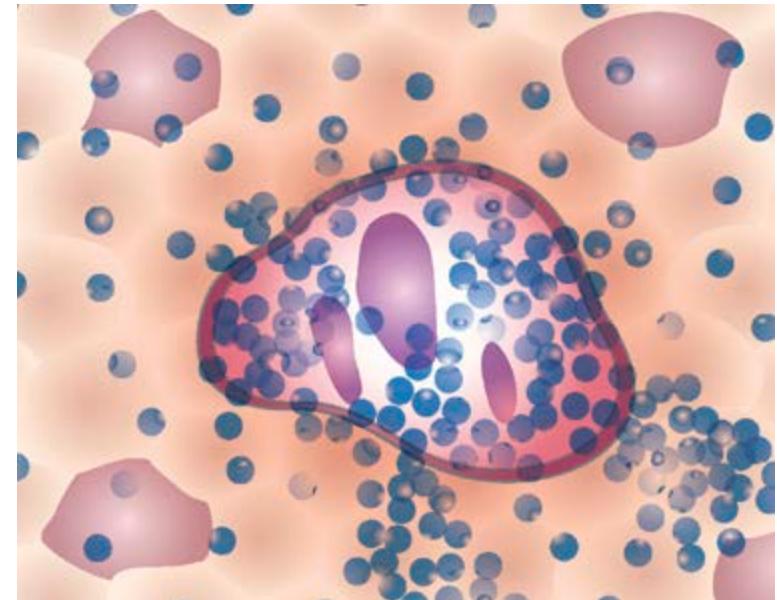
A definitive diagnosis of AIH cannot be established without a liver biopsy

Portal triad

Inflammation stages



Portal inflammation

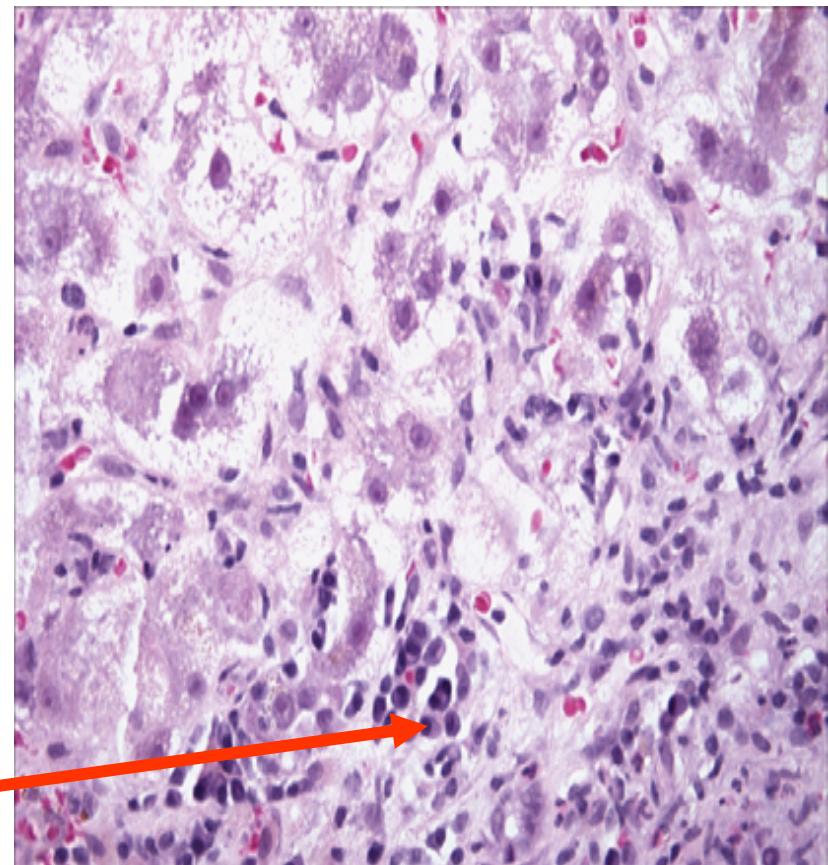
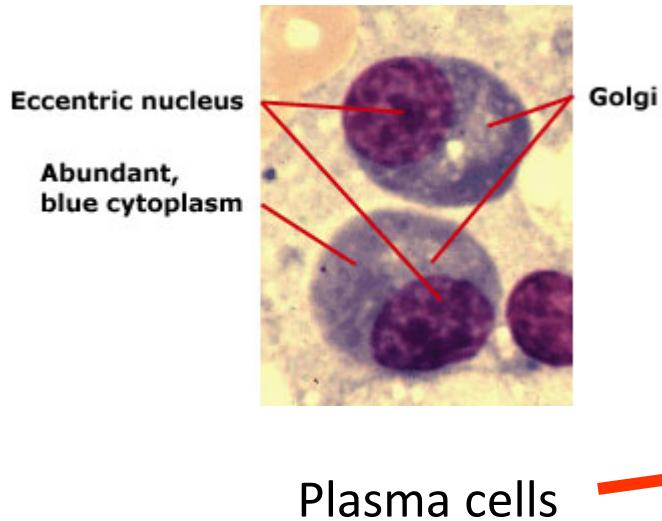


Interface hepatitis / piece meal necrosis

Autoimmune Hepatitis

Histology

- Prominent plasma cells



Ishak modification hepatic activity index (HAI)

Item	Score
Periportal or periseptal interface hepatitis (piecemeal necrosis)	0-4
Confluent necrosis	0-6
Focal (spotty) lytic necrosis, apoptosis and focal inflammation	0-4
Portal inflammation	0-4

Clinical Relevance

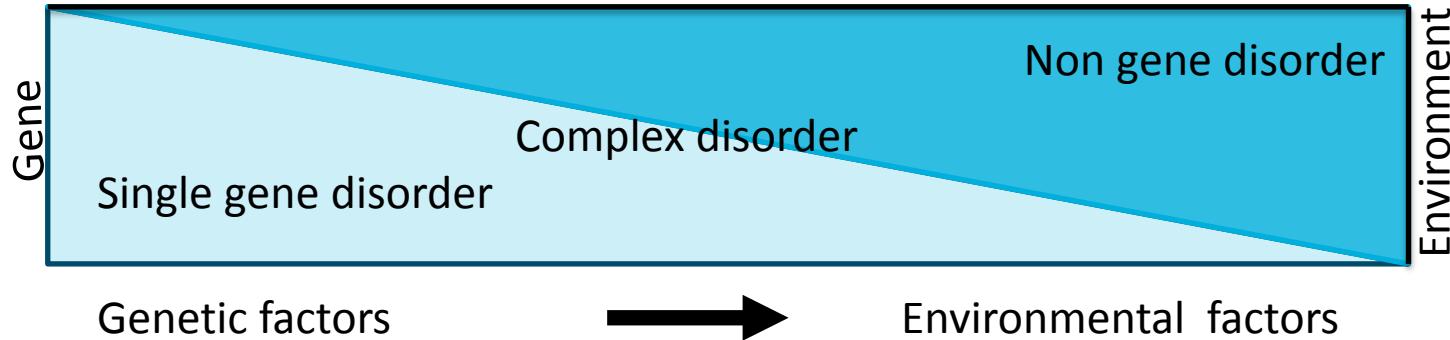
Decisions on start & stop therapy in AIH requires a liver biopsy

- Start therapy if HAI ≥ 4
- Stop therapy (if desired) HAI < 3

AIH pathogenesis

AIH & genetics

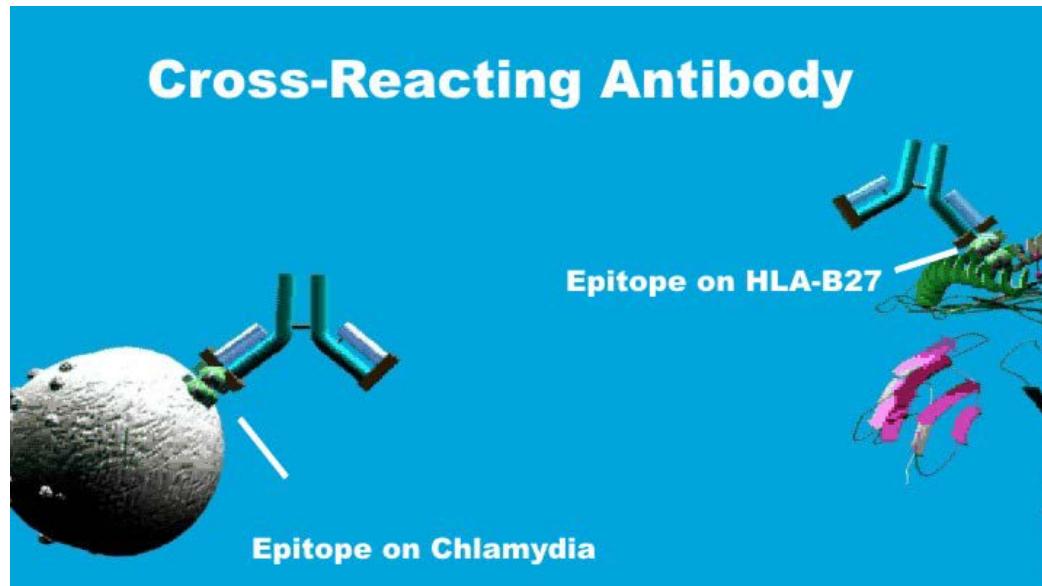
- AIH: ‘complex trait’ disease
 - Unknown mode of inheritance & involves one or more genes, operating alone or in concert, and interacts with (environmental) factors to affect risk of AIH



- **Association mapping**
 - Search for sequence variants that are shared among AIH patients

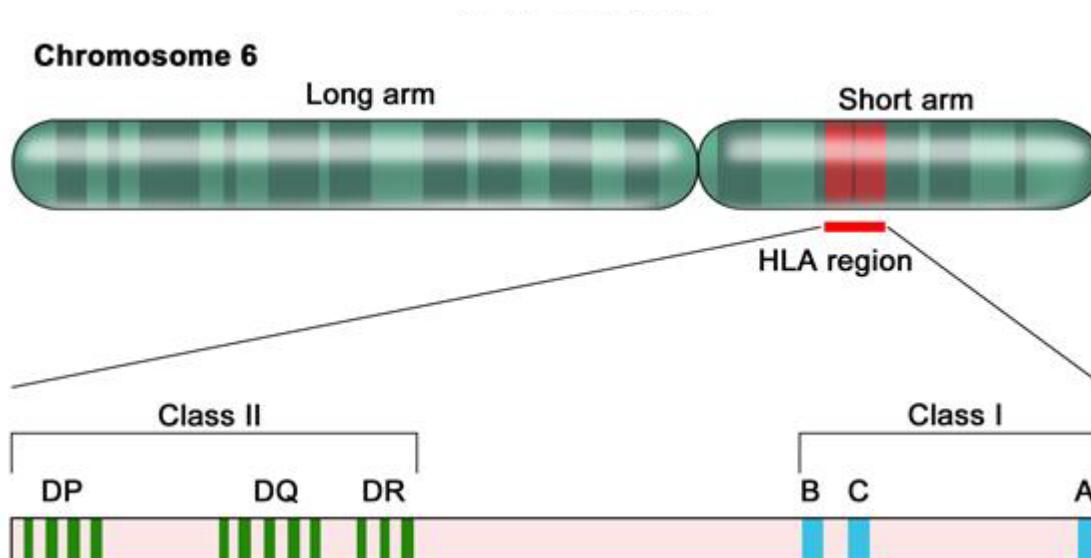
AIH Pathogenesis

- Foreign antigens resemble self antigens : molecular mimicry
- Repeated or intense exposure to these antigens may override self tolerance and induce auto reactivity
- Apoptosis generates new antigens that perpetuate the inflammation and immune response



The HLA system

- Human Leukocyte antigen (HLA) / major histocompatibility complex (MHC)
- Produces highly polymorphic glycoprotein complexes
- ~ 200 genes on chromosome 6
- 3 clusters
 - MHC class I: HLA-A, HLA-B, HLA-C
 - MHC class II: HLA-DR, HLA-DP, HLA-DQ
 - MHC class III: soluble components



Contribution of HLA class II to AIH

Protective

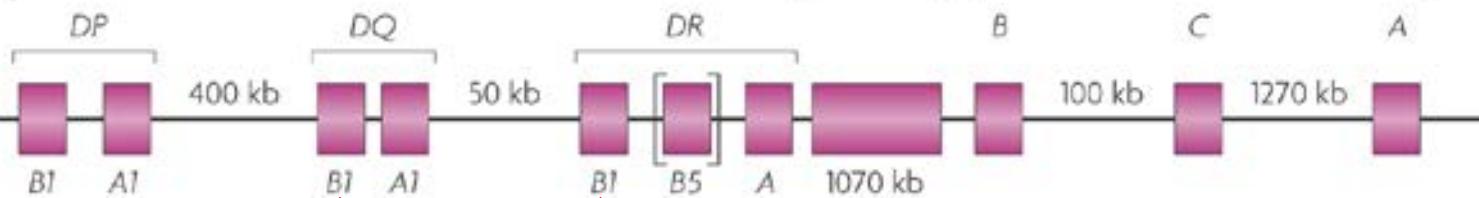
DQB1*04
DQB1*0301

DRB5*0101

Class II

Class III

Class I

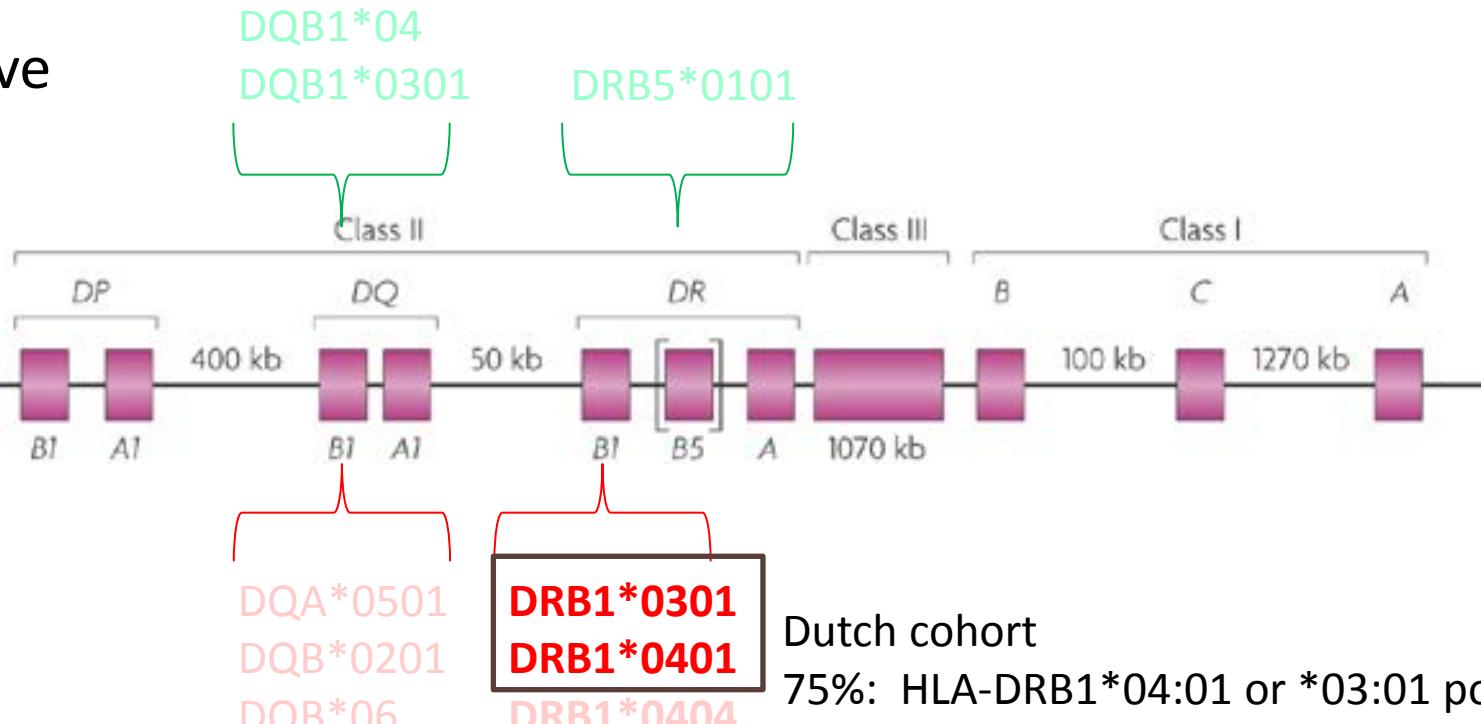


Risk

DQA*0501
DQB*0201
DQB*06
DRB1*0301
DRB1*0401
DRB1*0404
DRB1*0405
DRB1*1301

Contribution of HLA class II to AIH

Protective



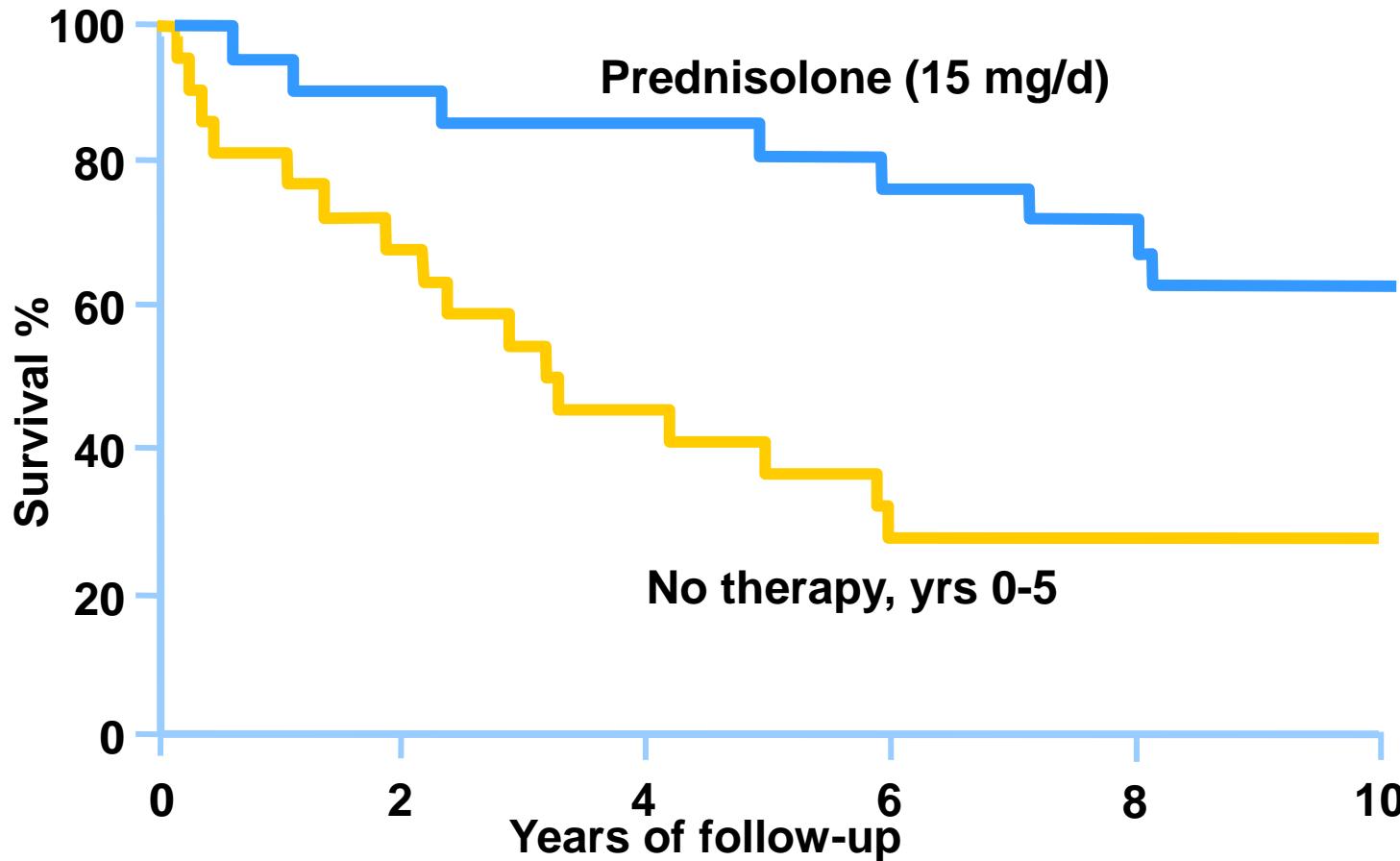
Risk

Dutch cohort

75%: HLA-DRB1*04:01 or *03:01 positive

AIH : Natural course

Natural course of AIH

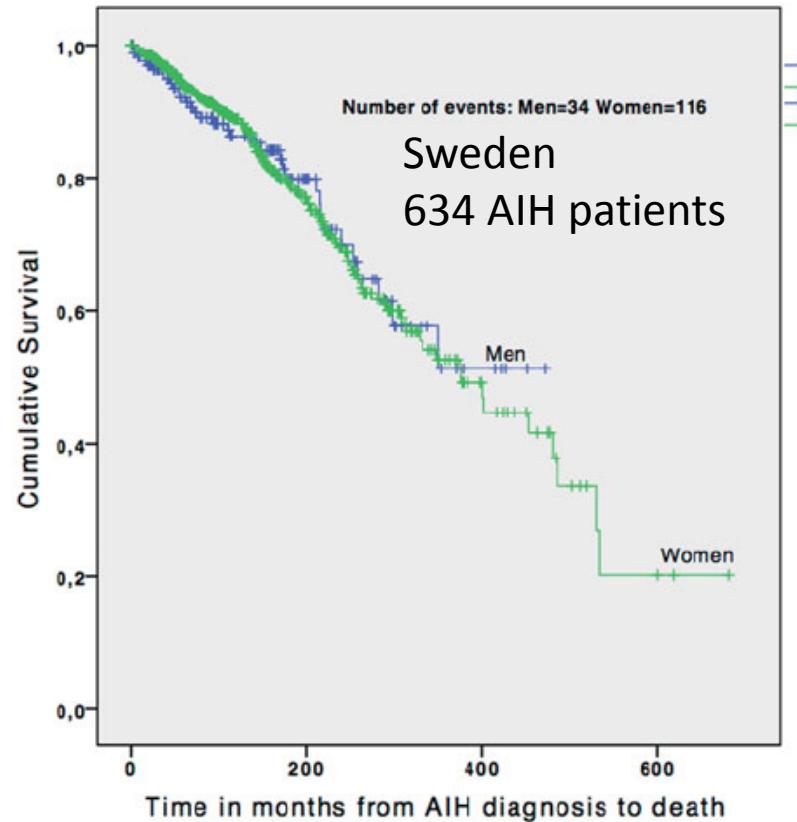


Cohort of 44 patients (1963-1967)

Untreated symptomatic AIH: 50% 3-5 year mortality rate

Untreated 3.3 yrs vs. Treated 12.2 yrs

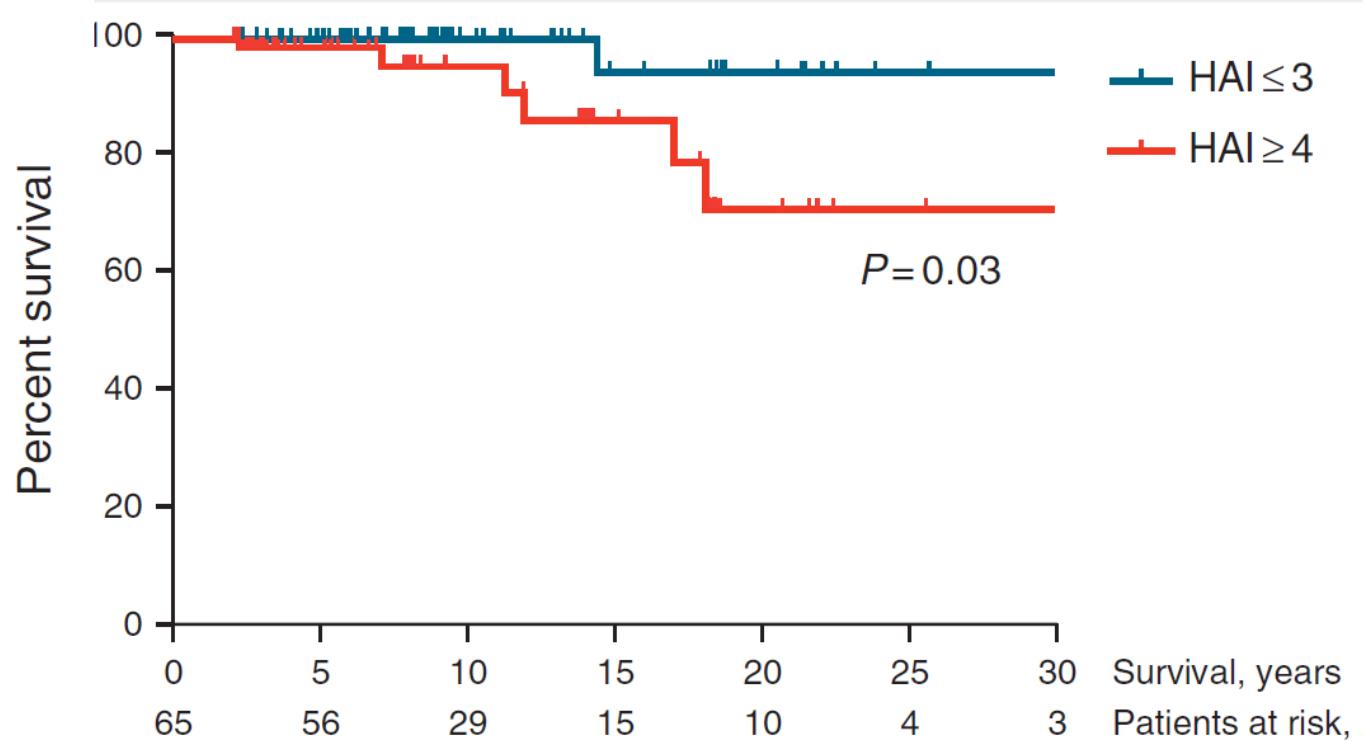
AIH survival



- Survival begins to diverge after 12 yrs (female) and 18 yrs (male)
- Cirrhosis at diagnosis: negative predictor for
 - overall ($p=0.03$) and transplant-free survival ($p=0.002$)
- No gender difference in survival

HAI score determines survival

Liver-related death or transplant



Persisting histological activity in patients with biochemical remission:
independent risk factor for long-term (transplant-free) survival.

Cancer in AIH

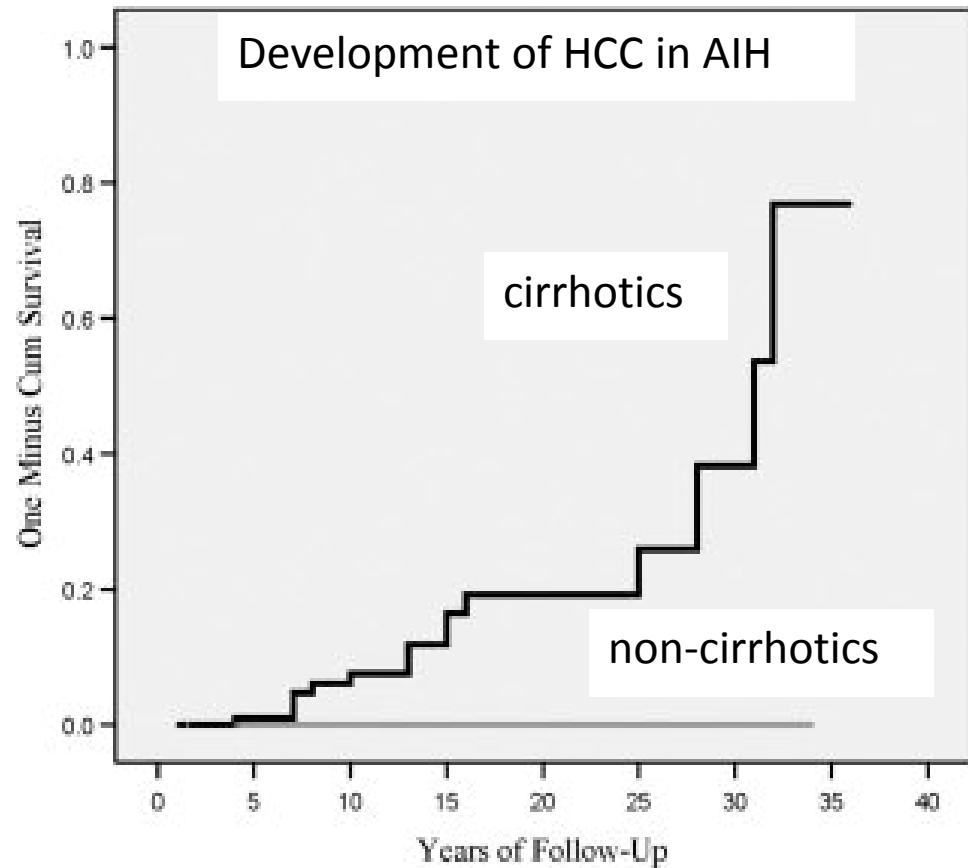
Cancer

Liver

- HCC only in cirrhotics
- Higher risk in males

Extrahepatic

- Relation to immunosuppression?
- Non melanoma skin cancer



Patients at risk:

Cirrhotic:	122	92	60	37	21	12	4	1	0
Non Cirrhotic:	121	104	81	46	27	10	1	0	0

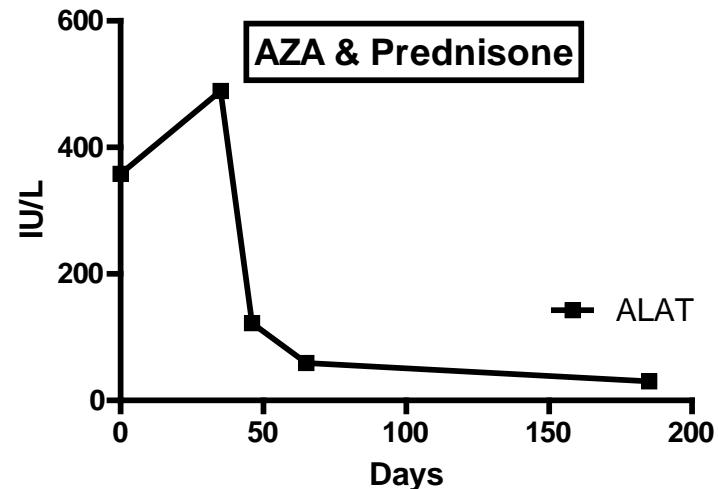
AIH & other autoimmune liver diseases

Nitrofurantoin induced AIH

- **Medical history**
 - Hemithyroidectomy
 - Recurrent cystitis
- **Drugs**
 - Nitrofurantoin 1 yr
- **Laboratory**
 - AP 171 IU/L , bili NL
 - ALT 489 IU/L, AST 414 IU/L
 - ANA, ASM negative
- **Radiology**
 - Right liver lobe atrophy
- **Histology**
 - Typical AIH
- **Treatment**
 - AZA 100 mg & Pred 5 mg
- **Follow-up**
 - Rapid remission



Confluent fibrosis & liver atrophy



Drug induced AIH

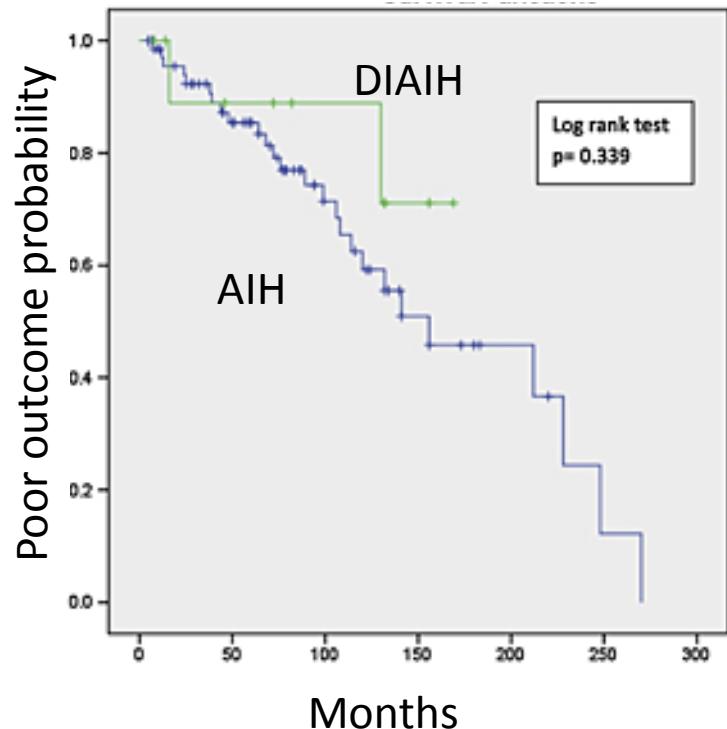
Natural history & outcome

- Two recent AIH cohorts
- Search for drug-induced AIH cases
- USA series 24/261
- UK series 11/82
- Total 35/346 (~10%)
- Nitrofurantoin n=15/35
- Minocyclin, statins, herbal

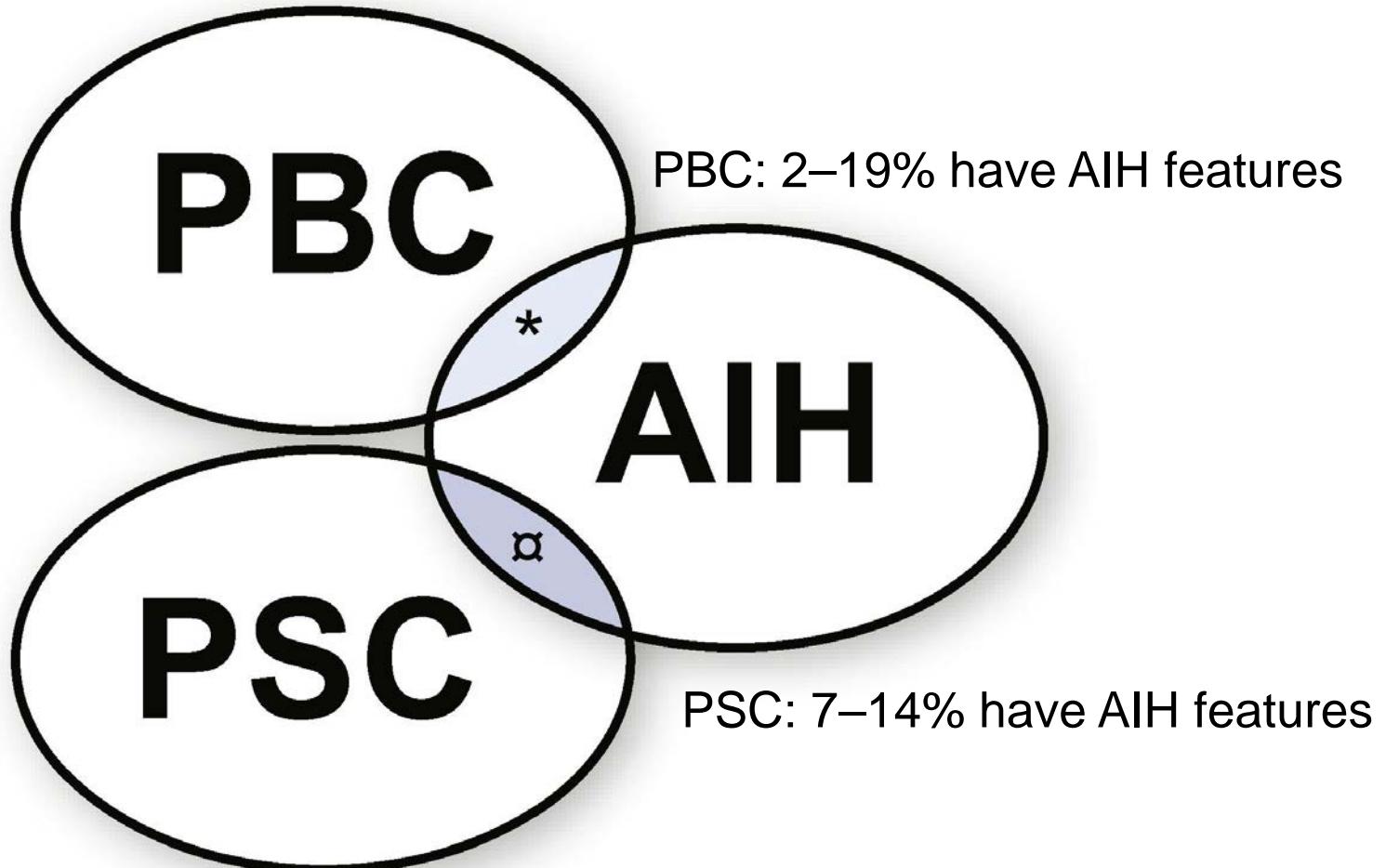
Drug induced AIH

Natural history & outcome

- Similar natural history
- Autoantibodies
 - ANA (83% versus 70%)
 - SMA (50% versus 45%)
- Histology
 - Grading & Staging
 - Cirrhosis is “absent” among DIAIH
- Radiology
 - Postnecrotic scarring: atrophy
- Treatment
 - Response to steroids
 - No relapse after discontinuation

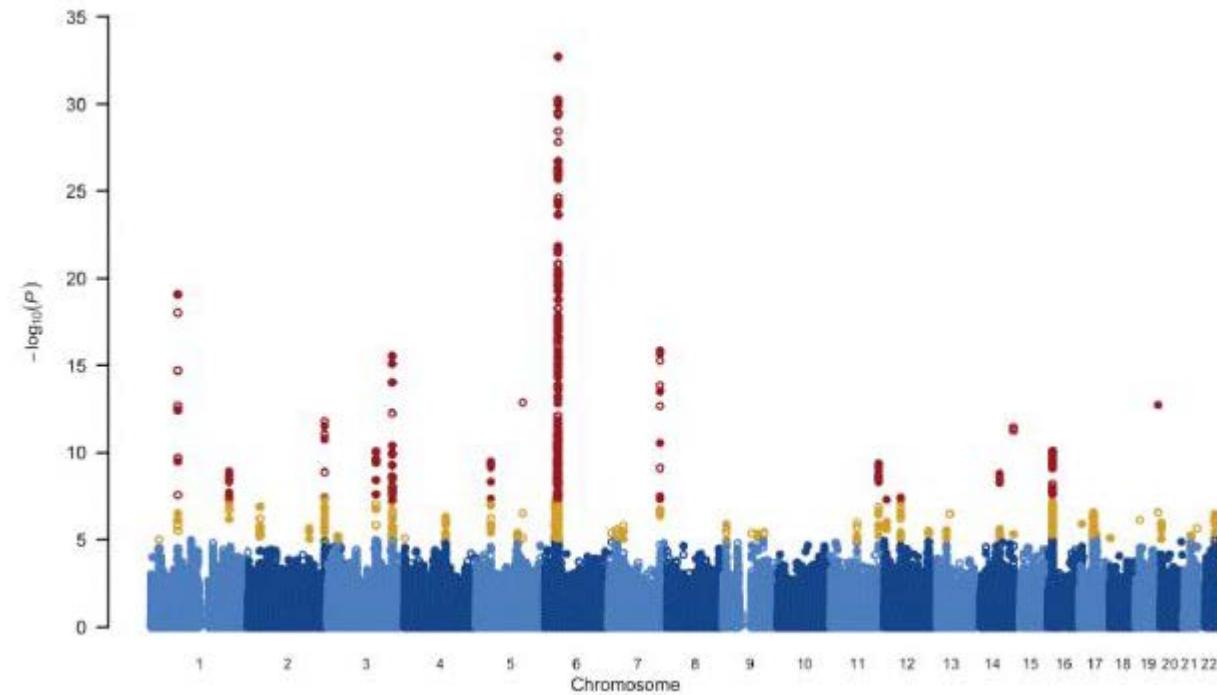


Overlap syndromes with AIH



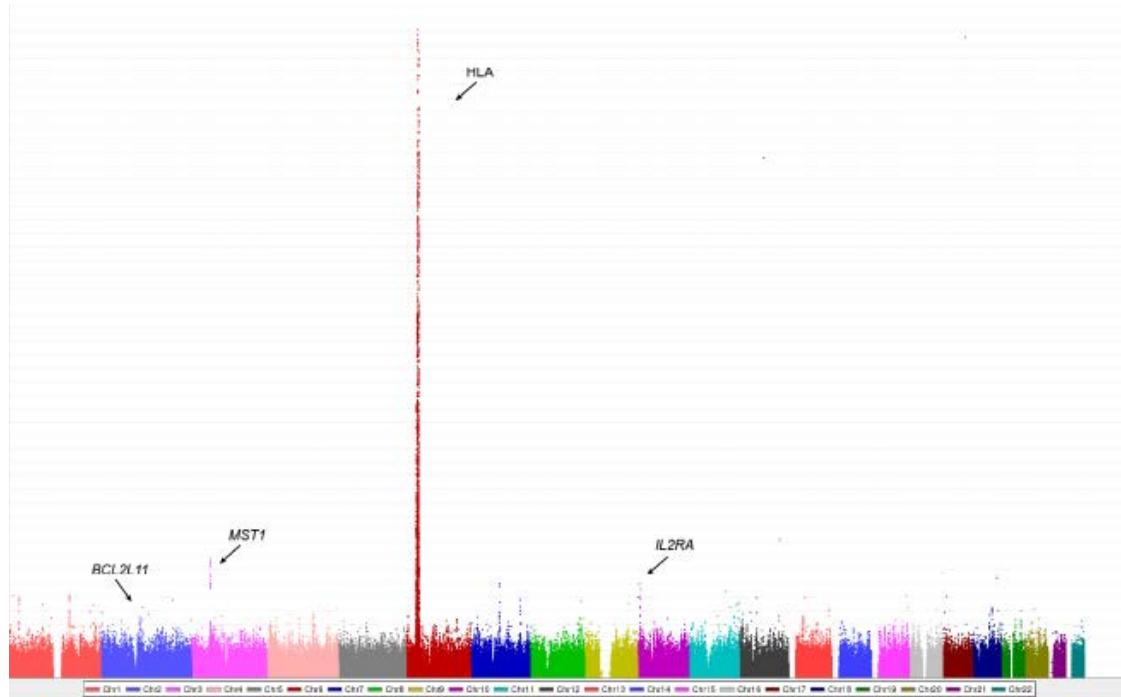
HLA association

PBC



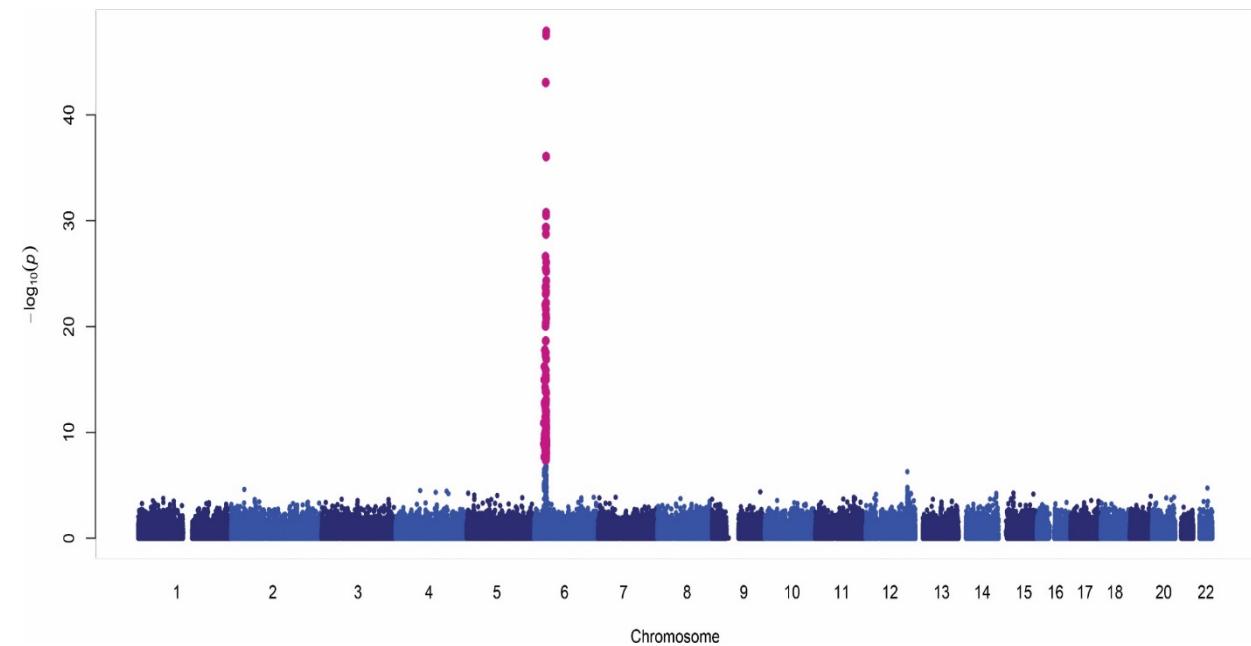
HLA association

PSC

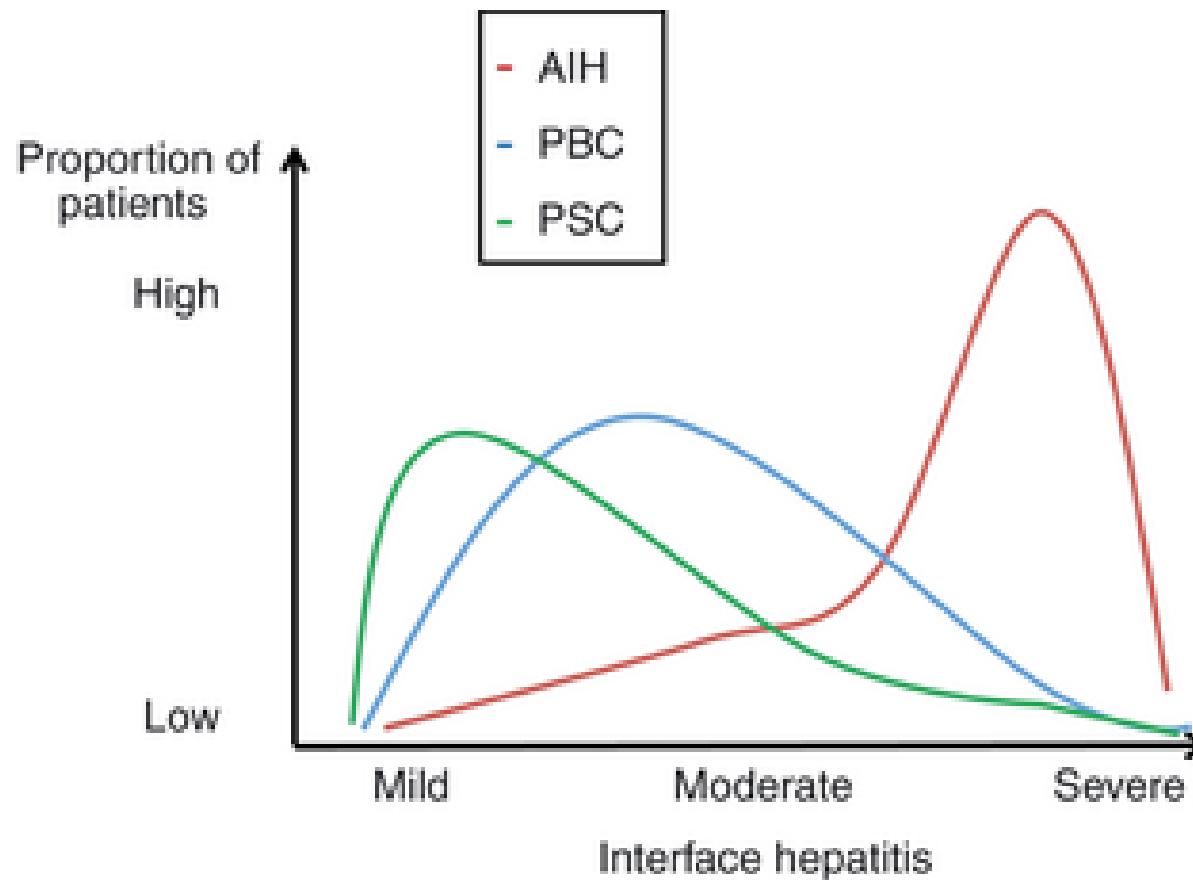


HLA association

AIH



Spectrum of autoimmune liver disease



What to do with overlap syndromes

- **Diagnosis**
 - Predominant feature leads in diagnostic process
 - Overlaps are no distinct diagnostic entities
 - Difficult to classify: PARIS criteria
 - PBC usually precedes AIH
 - Longitudinally collect data rather than at a single point (wait and see)
- **Pathogenesis**
 - Genetic factors of AIH, PSC & PBC overlap : HLA class II
- **Treatment**
 - Empirical / no evidence base
 - Dominant clinical feature should be treated first
 - Individualized therapy and adjust according to response
 - Think twice before you start steroids

AIH : Treatment

Treatment

- Should I treat AIH, if so when?
- How should I treat?
- What should I give?
- Can I stop?

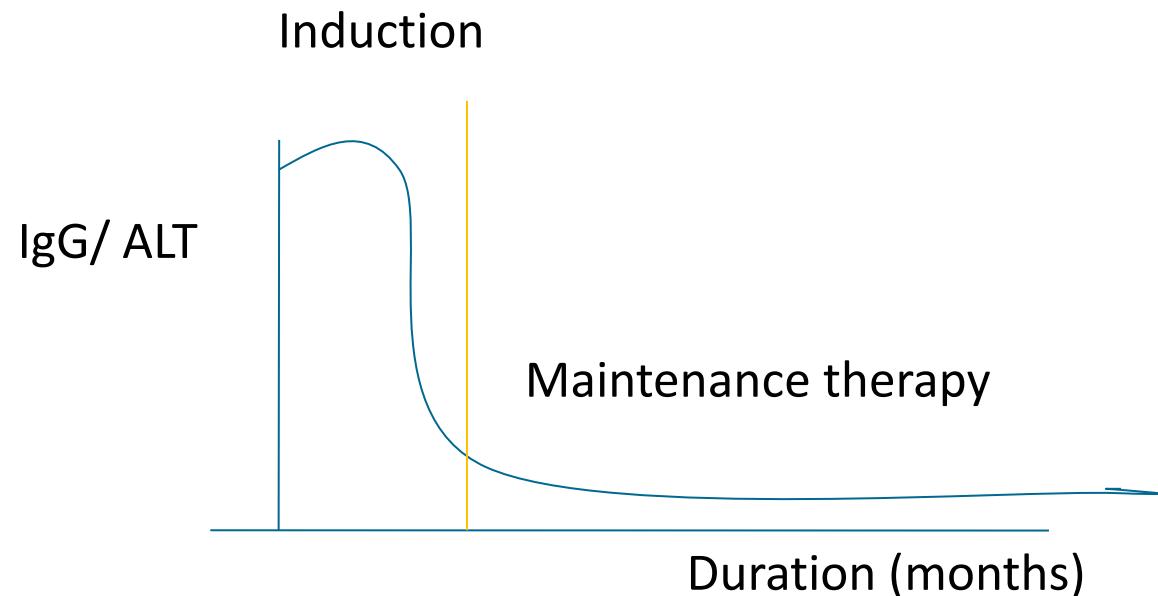
3

- You have diagnosed autoimmune hepatitis 12 months ago with a 64-year-old female and started treatment. She will visit your out-patient clinic. What is the best set of parameters to judge whether the autoimmune hepatitis is in remission?
 1. Bilirubine & creatinine
 2. ASAT & immunoglobulin M
 3. Bilirubin & albumin
 4. ALAT & immunoglobulin G

Autoimmune Hepatitis

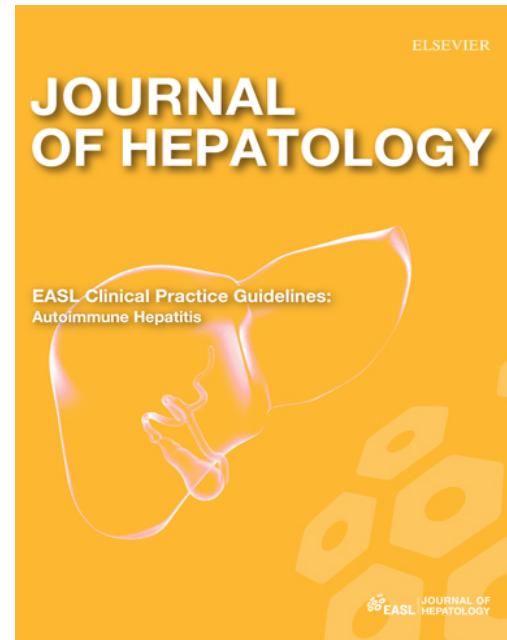
Overall Goals of Treatment

- Induce remission
- Prevent disease progression
- Minimize relapse of disease
- Improve survival
- Minimize medication side effects



When to start treatment in AIH

1. Measure transaminases & IgG
 - ALT > 3 nl
 - IgG : elevated
2. Test for autoantibodies
 - ANA, ASM, SLA, LKM
3. Assess liver histology
 - Fibrosis stage
 - Hepatitis activity score (HAI)



Start treatment*

- Active disease (HAI \geq 4/18)
- Advanced fibrosis / cirrhosis
- Relapsers

*Exception: mild disease: HAI < 4, no/ mild fibrosis, ALT < 3 nl
Balance treatment against co-morbidity and life expectancy

4

- A 28 yr. old female presents for evaluation of abnormal liver-associated enzymes. Overall, she feels well and the physical exam is unremarkable. Labs reveal ASAT of 2124 U/L, ALAT of 2256 U/L, ANA and ASMA are positive. Liver biopsy shows severe panlobular necrosis. Which one of the following is the appropriate next step?
 - A. Begin azathioprine as monotherapy of 50 mg daily until remission achieved.
 - B. Begin cyclosporine 100 mg twice daily in combination with mycophenolate 500 mg twice daily.
 - C. Refer patient for liver transplant evaluation
 - D. Begin prednisone 30 mg daily
 - E. Repeat liver associated enzymes in 3-4 weeks prior to making treatment decisions

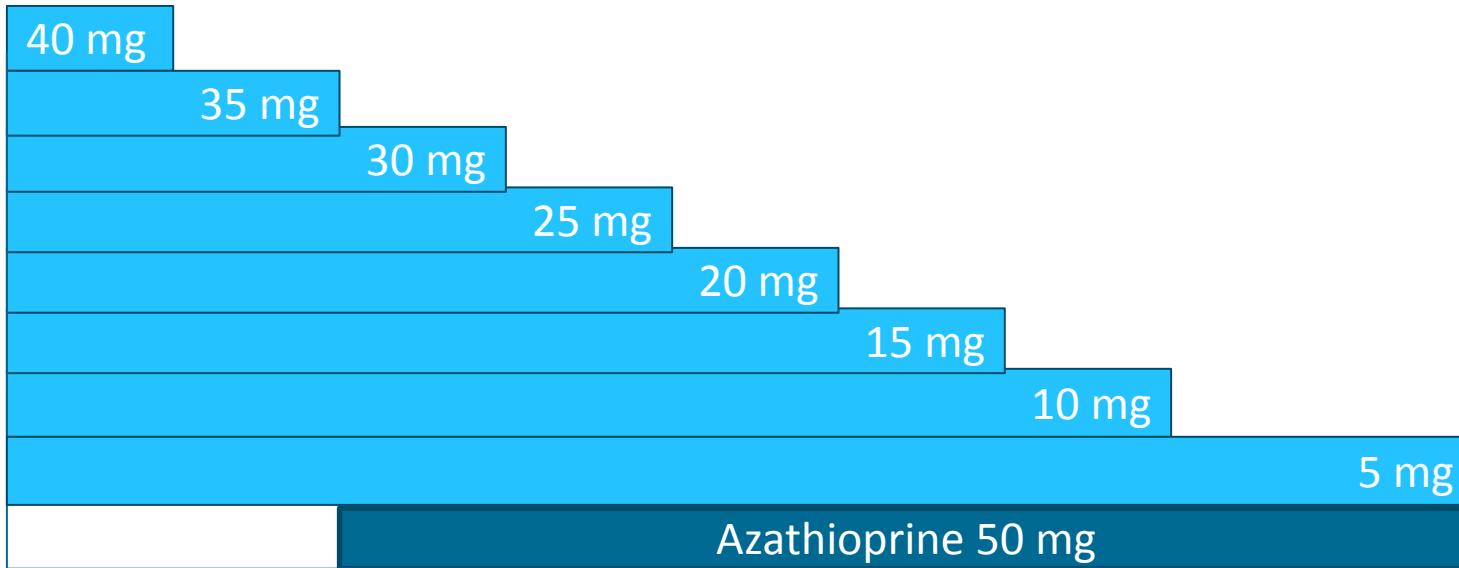
How to start treatment in AIH

EASL Clinical Practice Guidelines: Autoimmune hepatitis[☆]

European Association for the Study of the Liver*

Example patient 75 kg

Prednisone: 0.5-1 mg/kg/day & Azathioprine 50 mg/day



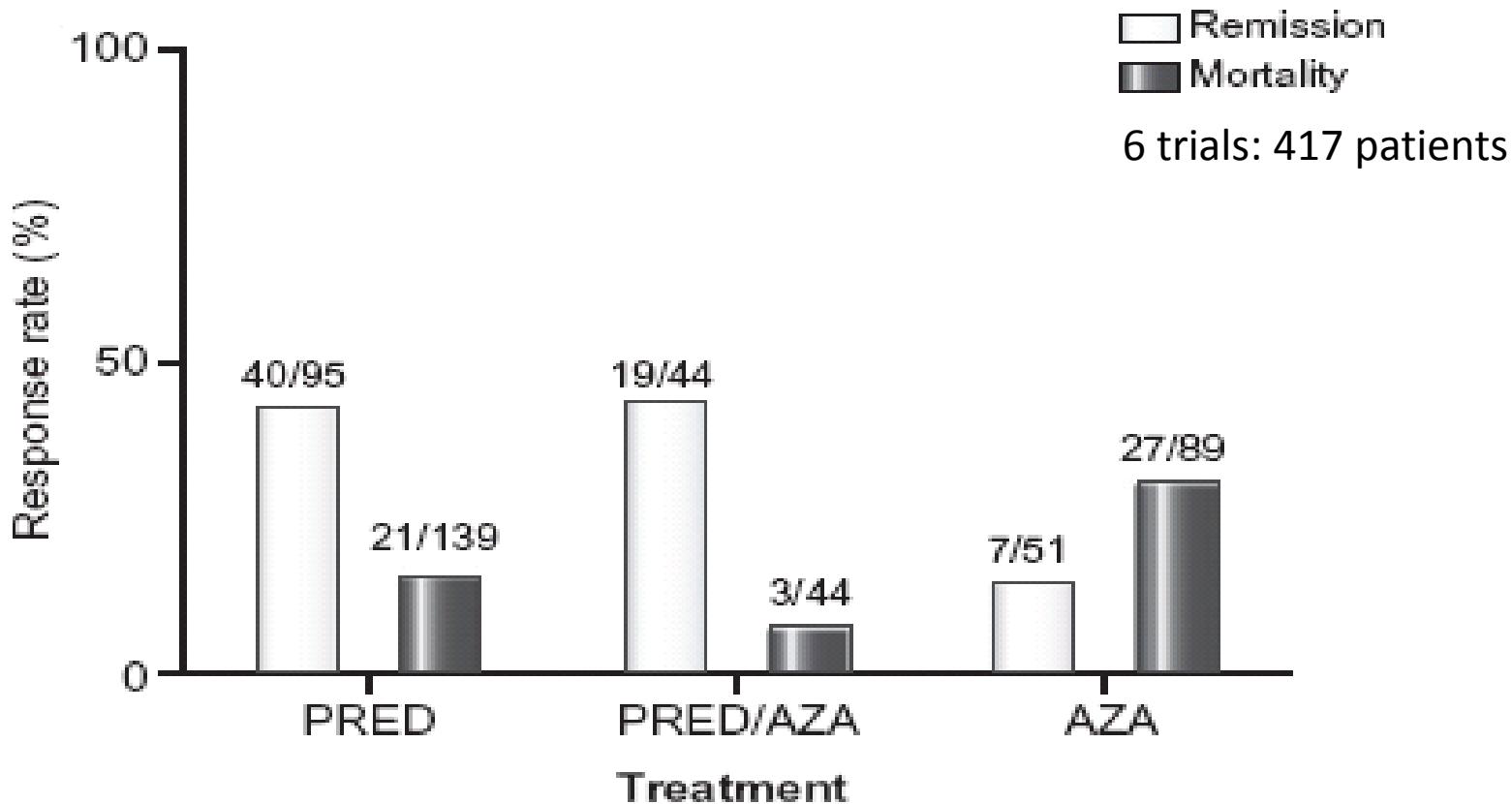
Measure

Efficacy: ALT & IgG as outcome measures

Safety: kreatinine, lipase, leukocytes

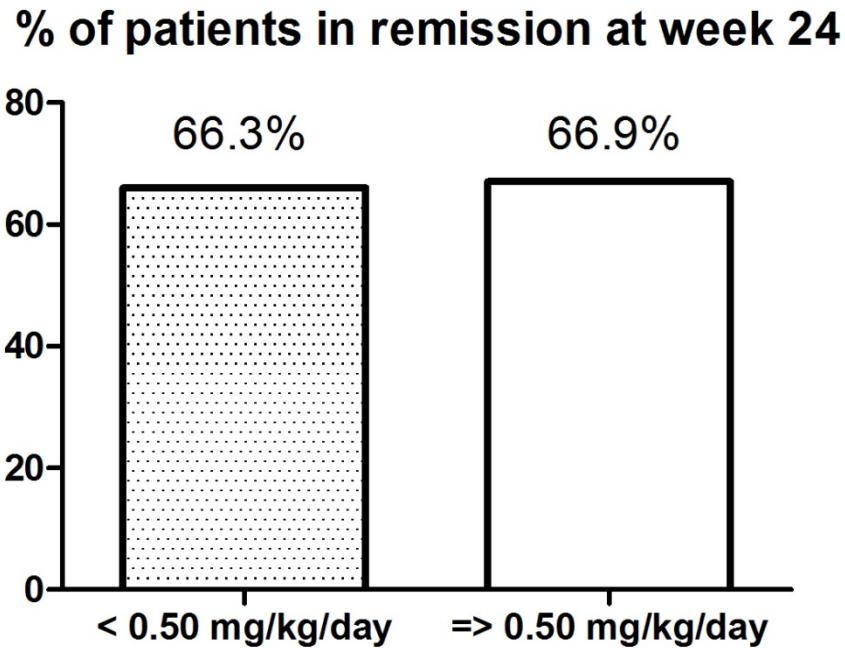
AIH induction therapy

naïve patients



PRED monotherapy & PRED + AZA are better in achieving AIH remission

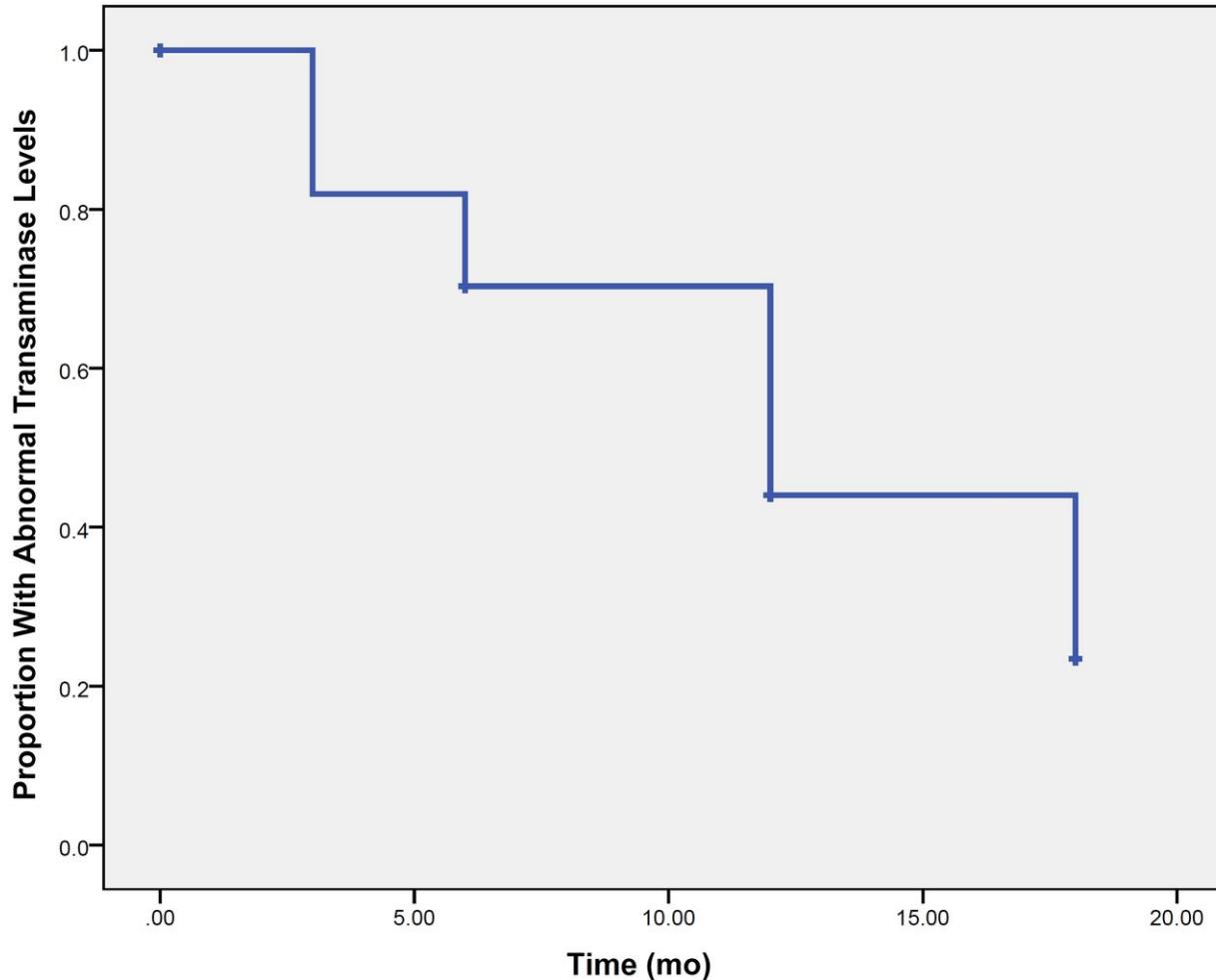
Low or High Prednisone for induction



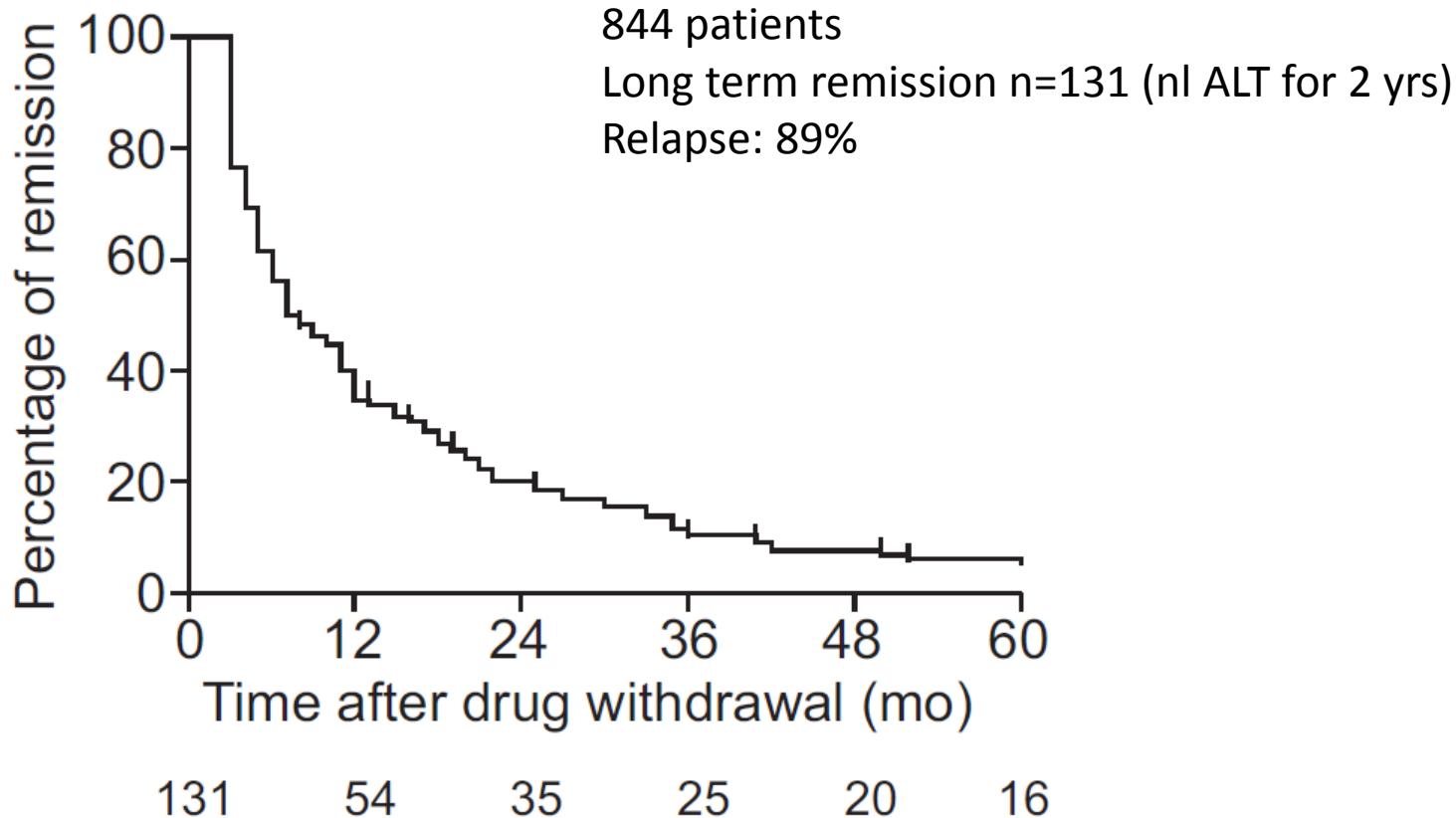
- Multicenter cohort study (Radboudumc, VUmc, Rijnstate, UKE Hamburg)
- 234 AIH patients analyzed for remission at week 24 (normal ALT)
- Remission of AIH defined as ALT < 45 IU/ml
- Remission is obtained regardless of Prednisone dosage

AIH: response to therapy

159 Canadian Pediatric AIH patients



Stopping AIH therapy

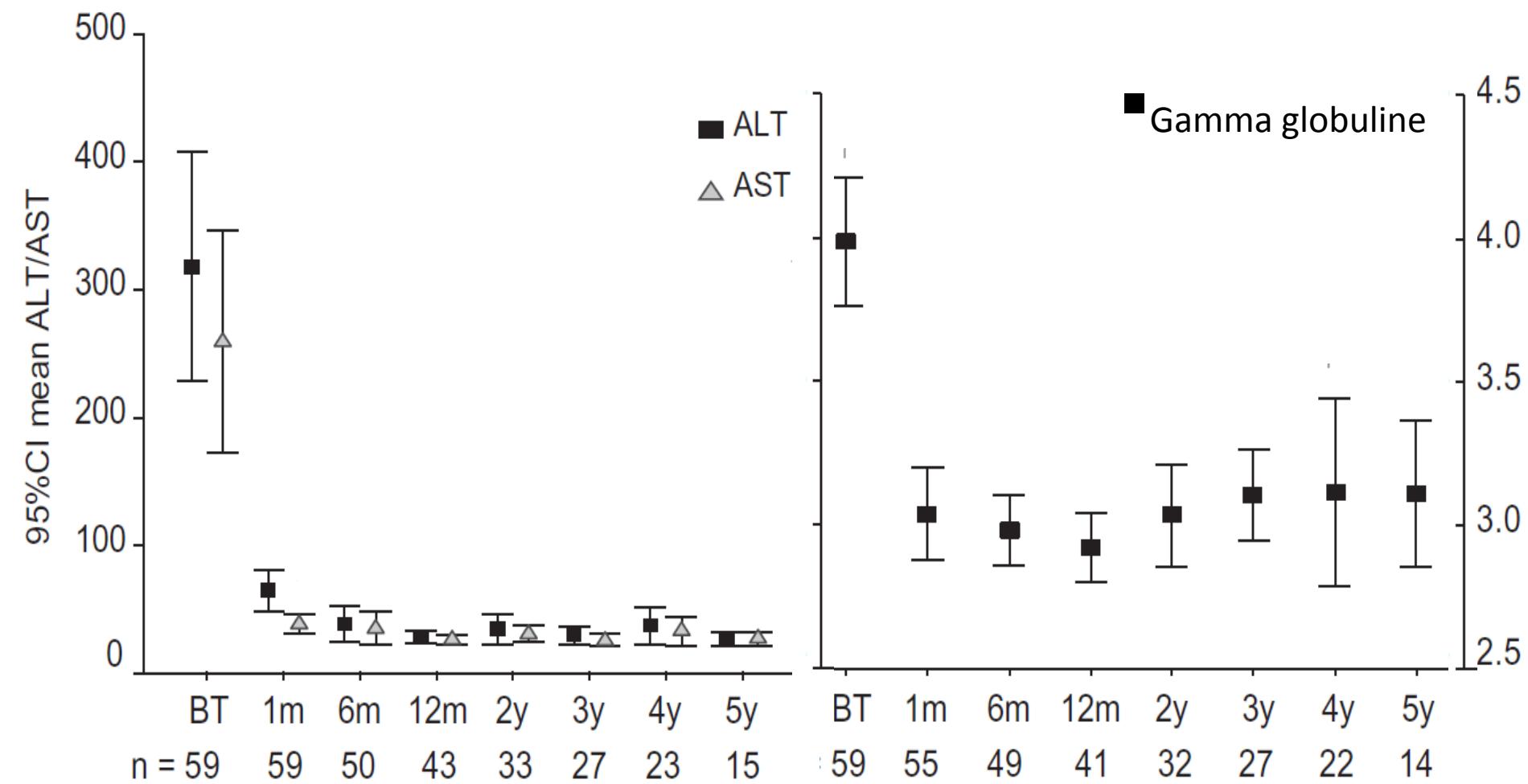


Relapse is universal in AIH: drug free remission is the exception

Alternatives for Prednisone / Azathioprine?

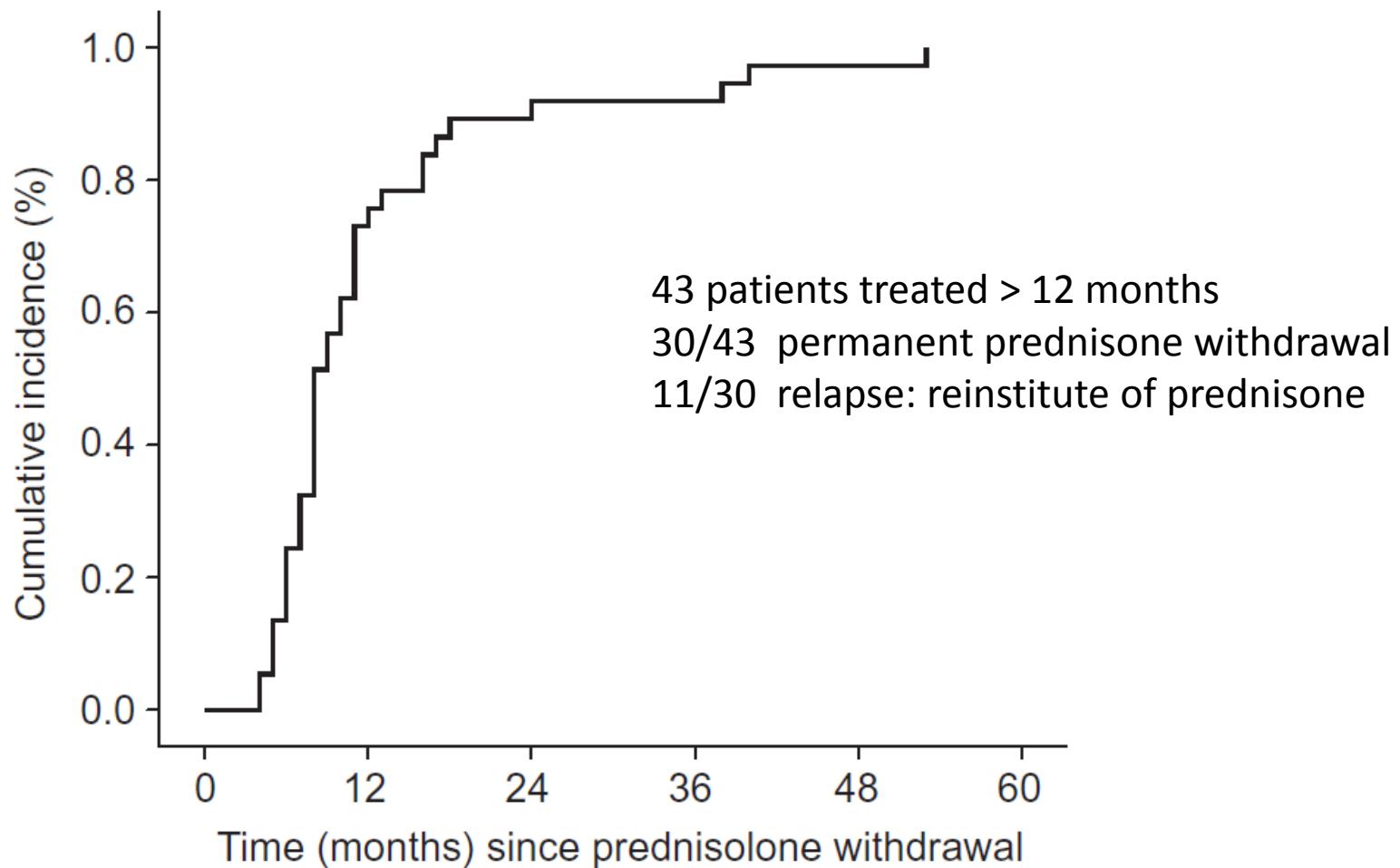
Mycophenolate induction therapy

naïve patients

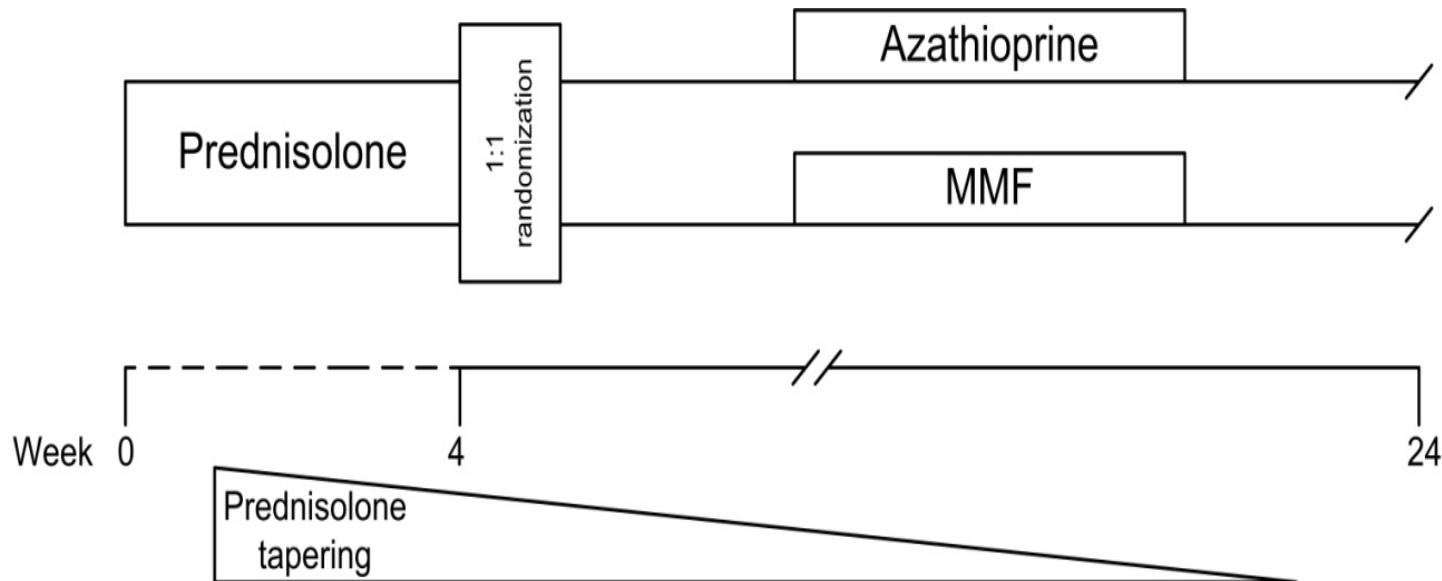


Mycophenolate induction therapy

cumulative incidence of prednisolone withdrawal during MMF treatment

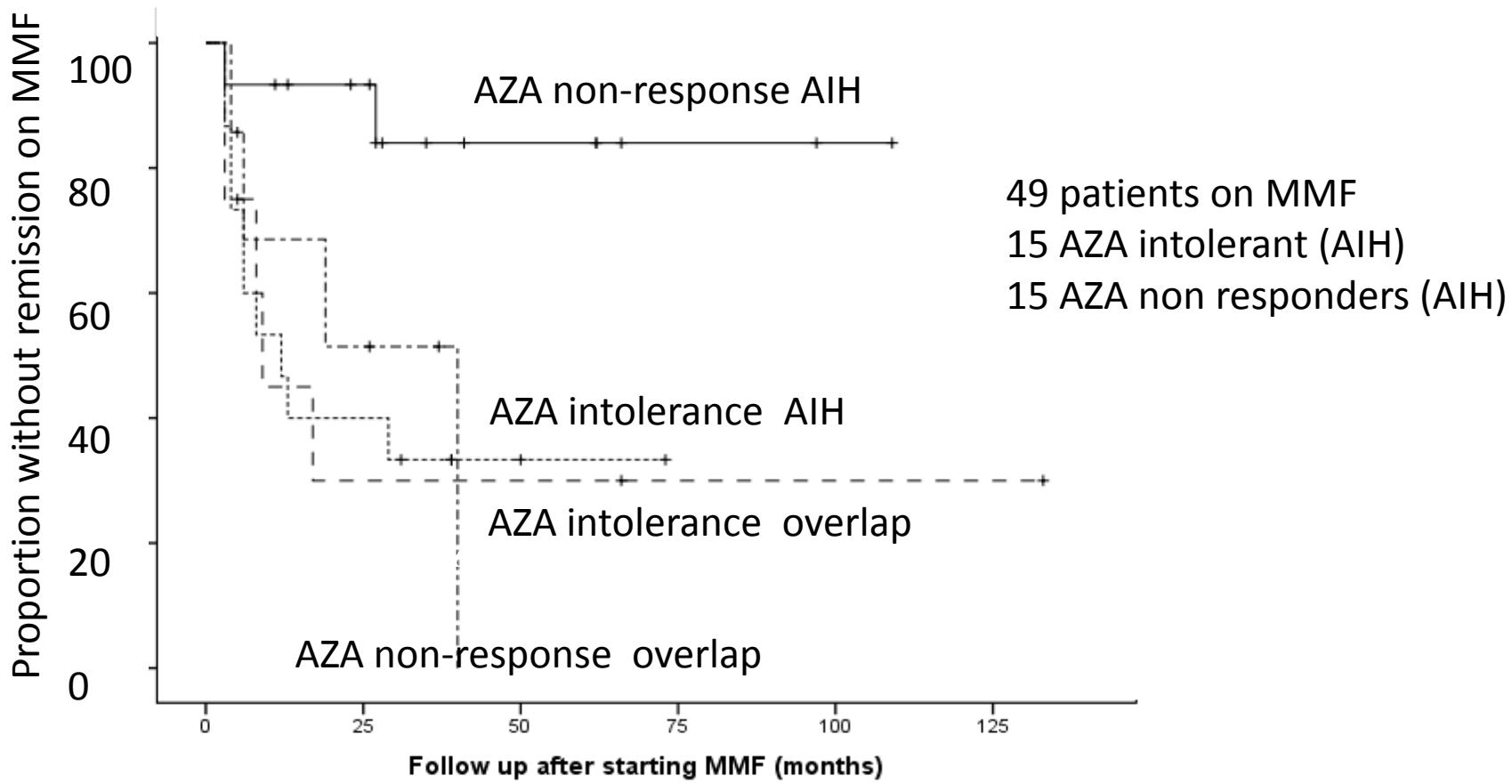


DUTCH CAMARO trial



Mycophenolate

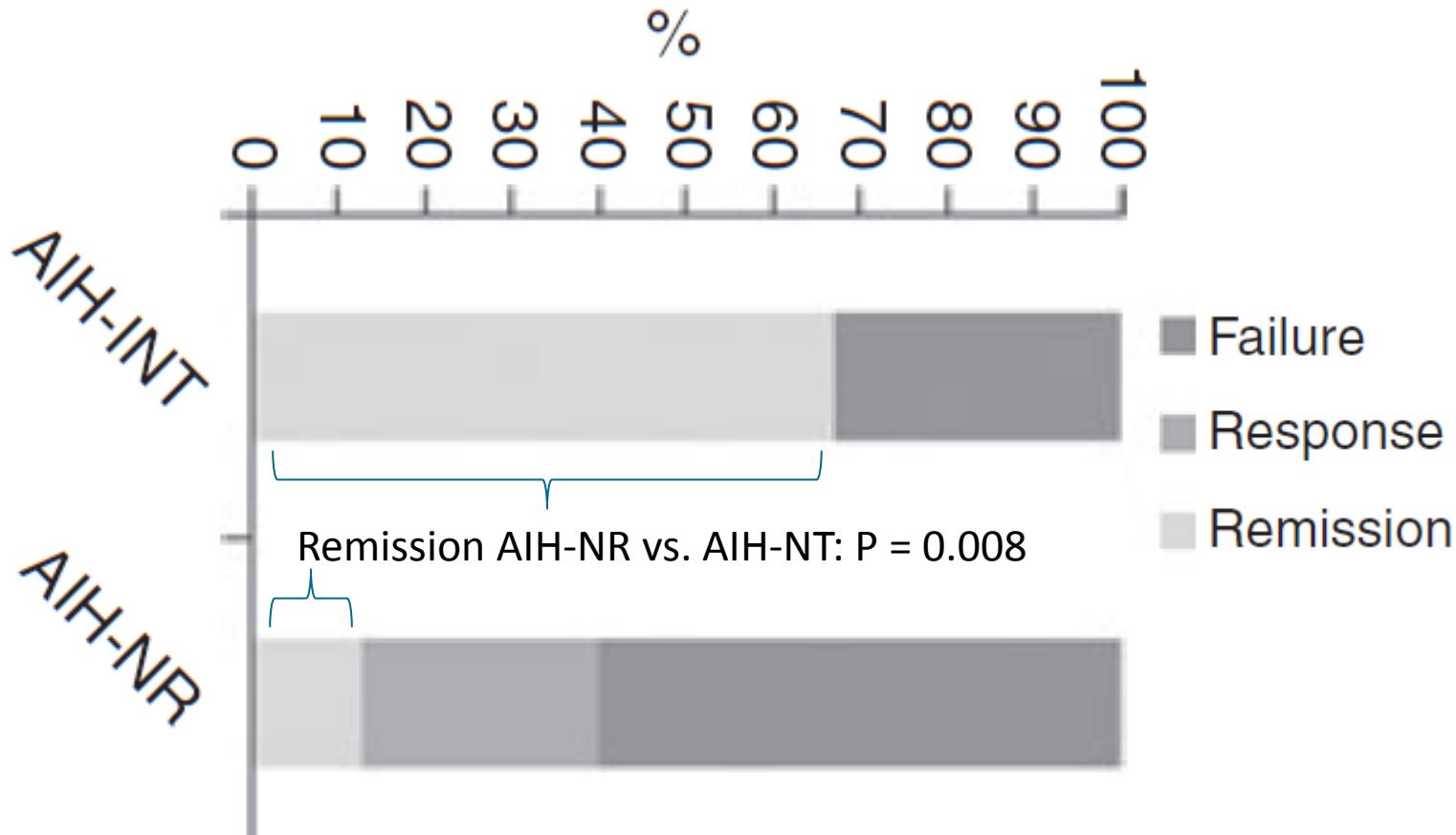
In AZA intolerance vs. nonresponse



MMF induces response in AZA intolerance but less so in non responders

Mycophenolate

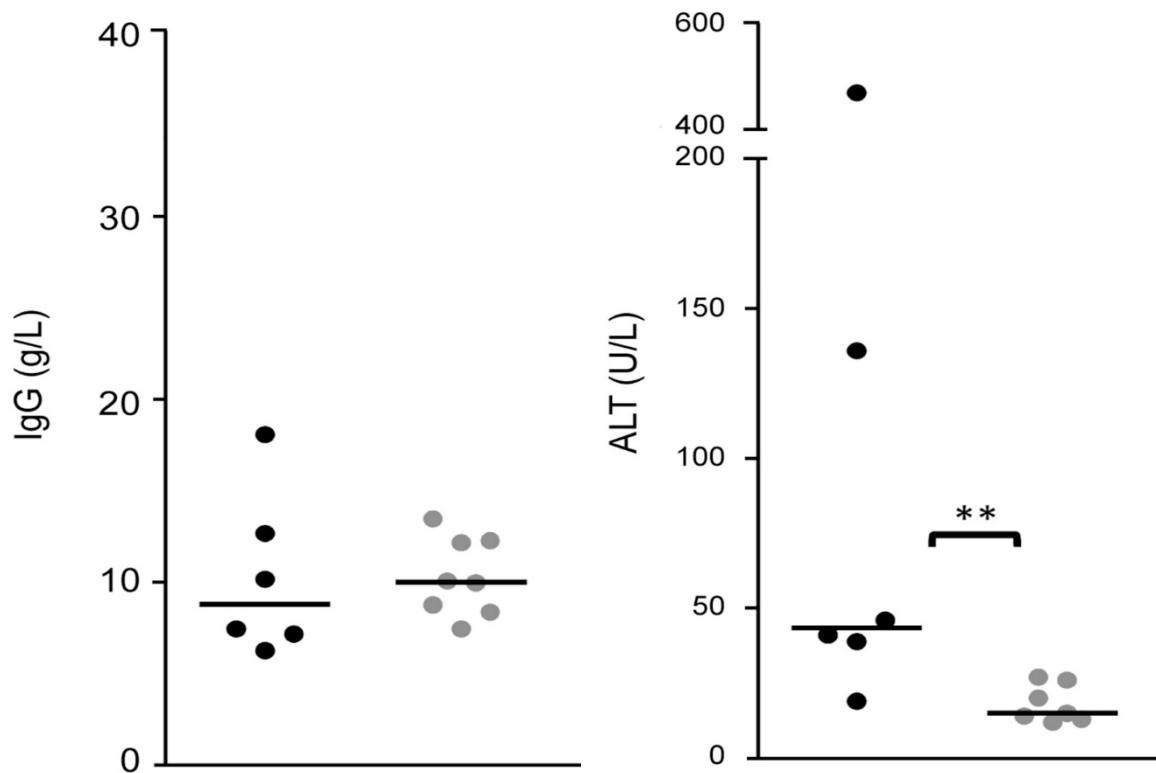
In AZA intolerance vs. nonresponse



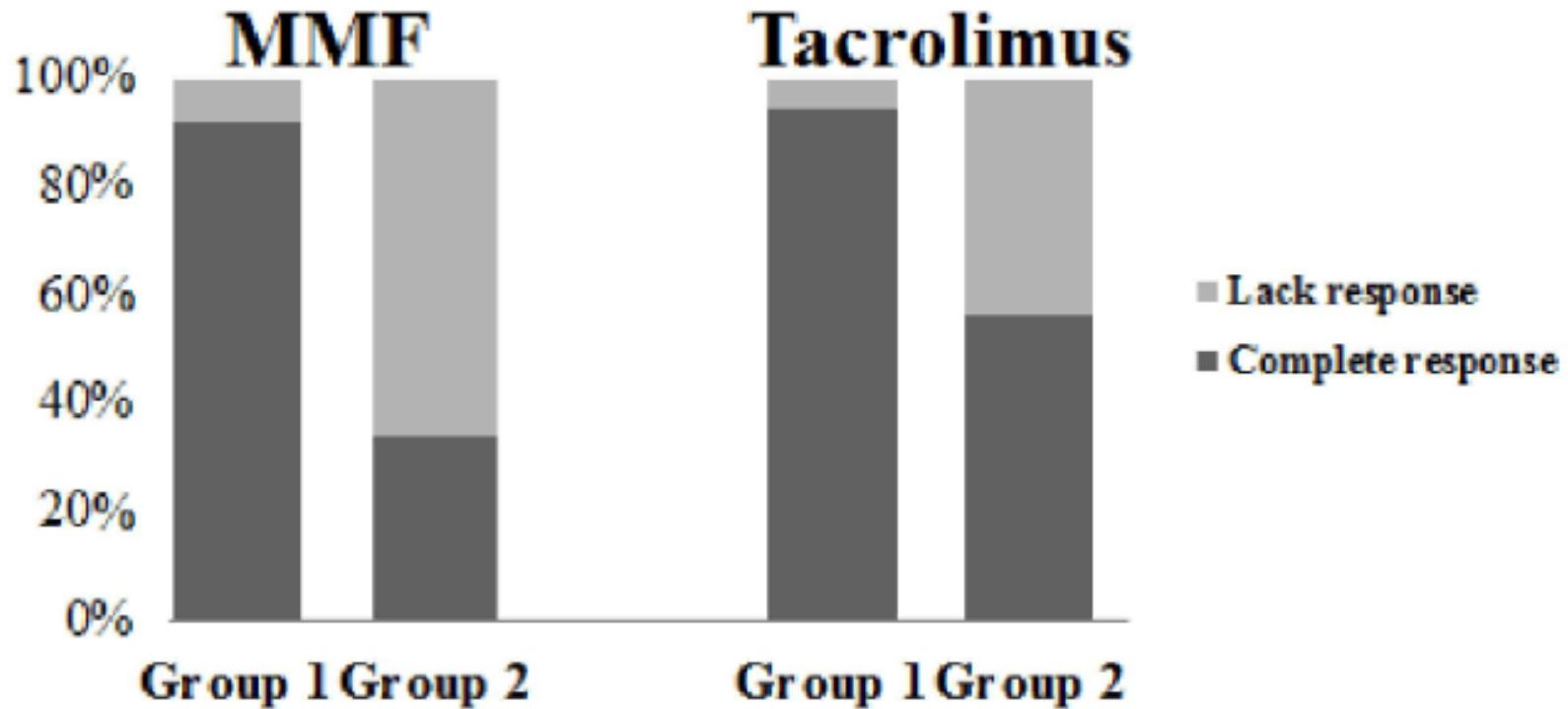
MMF induces remission in AZA intolerant > AZA nonresponders

Switching to 6MP in AZA intolerance

- Cohort of 22 AZA intolerant AIH patients
- After switch to 6-MP, 15/22 (68%) biochemical response
- After 6 months 8/20 complete & 7/20 partial response



Second line after non response to AZA

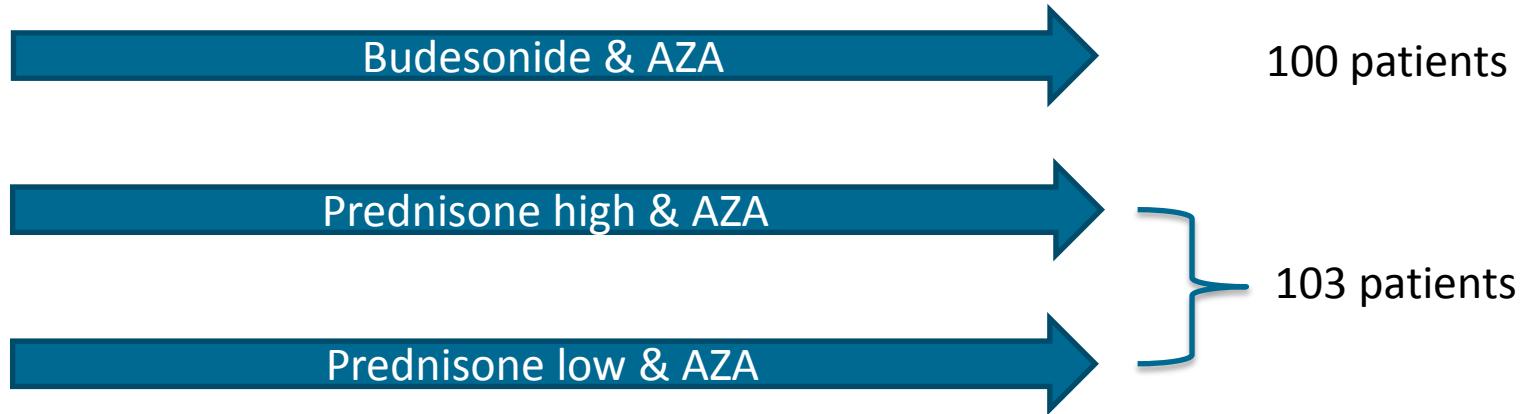


- Group 1: intolerant to AZA
- Group 2 non responders

Budesonide

Budesonide RCT in AIH

6 months



Endpoints

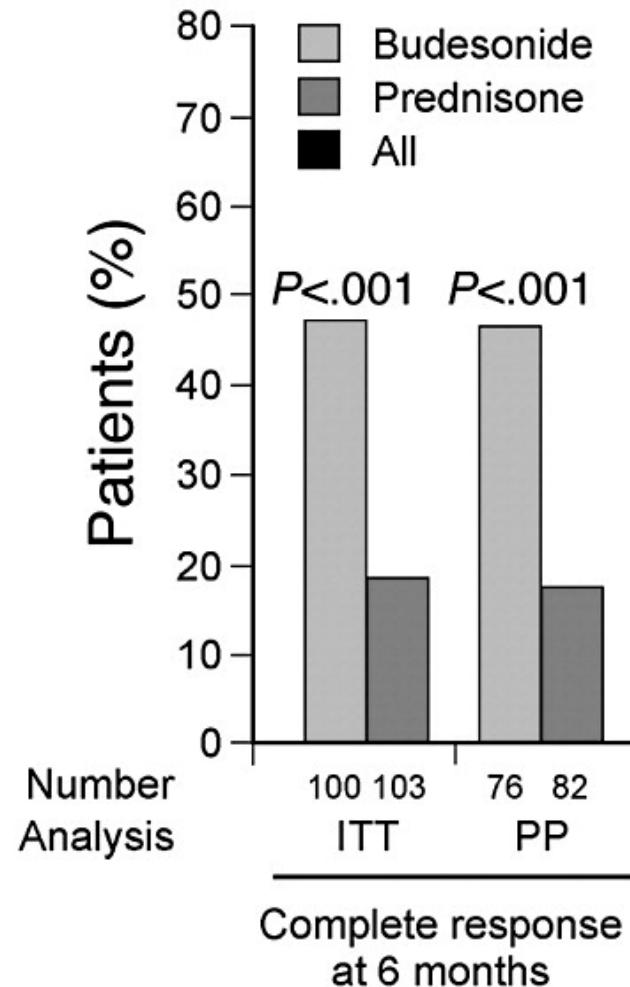
- At 6 months
- ALT & AST <NL w/o predefined steroid-specific side effects

Dosage

- Budesonide 9 mg/day
- AZA 1-2 mg/kg/day
- Prednisone high: week 1-8 cum 1820 mg , month 2-6: 10 mg/day
- Prednisone low: week 1-8 cum 1400 mg, month 2-6: 10 mg/day

Treatment of AIH

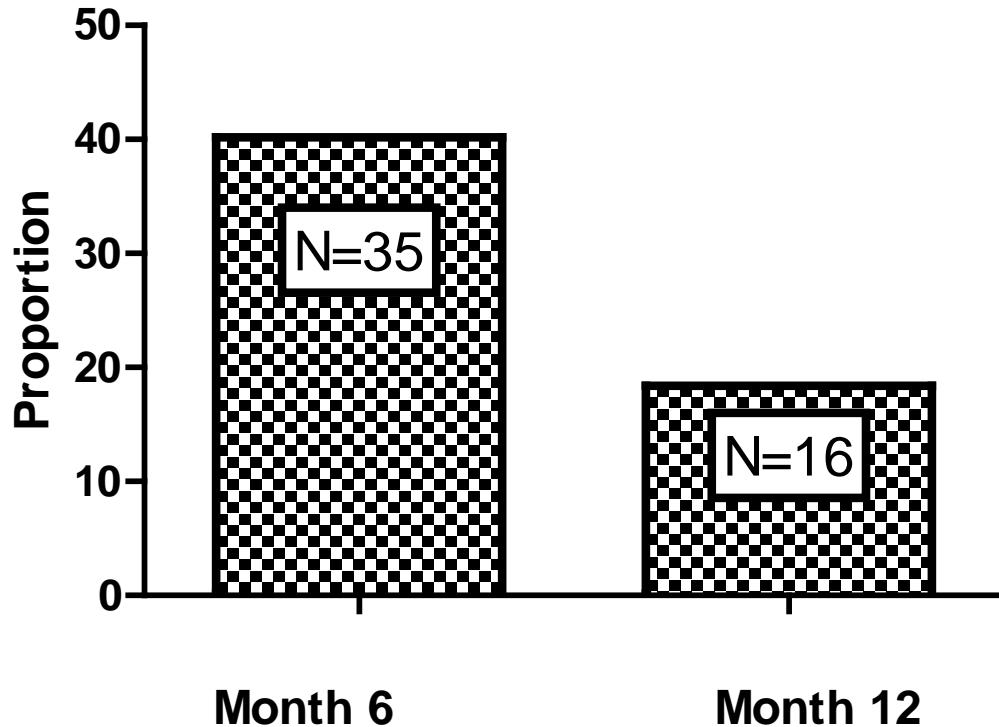
Induction



Budesonide & AZA induces and maintains remission in noncirrhotic AIH

Budesonide in AIH

Less adverse events in switchers

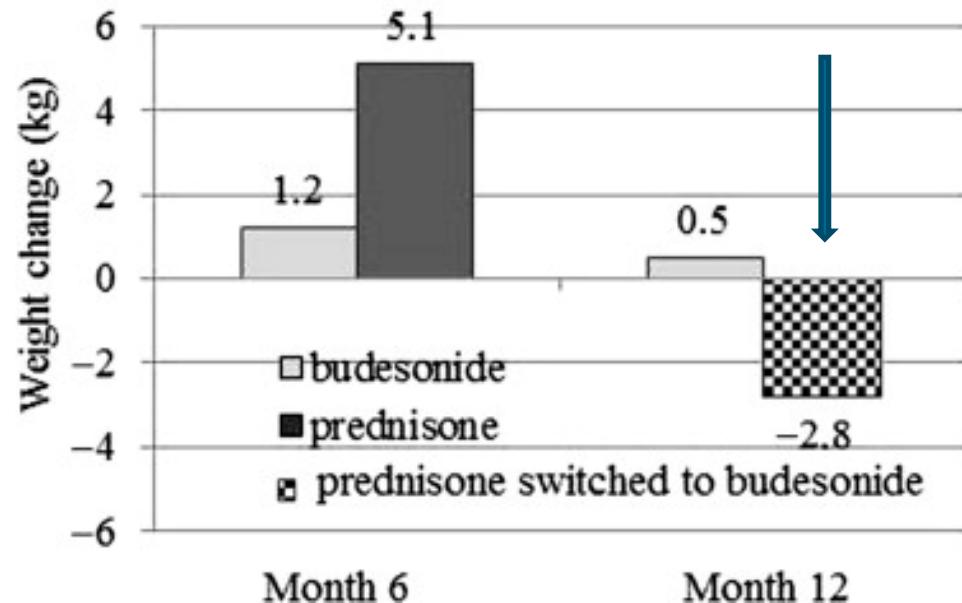


Decrease of Steroid Specific Side Effects in prednisone to budesonide switchers

Budesonide in AIH

Pediatric cohort

- 46 AIH patients (11 M; 35 F)
- Age 9-17 years
- RCT 6 months
- budesonide (n = 19)
- prednisone (n = 27)
- Follow-up
- 6 months of open-label budesonide



Teaching points

- Clinical diagnosis, ALAT IgG , autoantibodies, histology
- Any age, Females . Males
- Do not treat without a liver biopsy result
- Cirrhosis matters
- Nitrofurantoin induced AIH
- Prednisone followed by azathioprine
- Stopping = Relapse, unless
- Azathioprine intolerance: MMF, 6-MP
- Azathioprine non response: oeps Tacrolimus?

Multiple Choice Questions

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UEG Summerschool

1

- A 18 yr-old female presents with malaise, fatigue, and myalgias. She mentions that her stools are lighter color than normal. Physical examination is remarkable for jaundice and a liver edge 2 finger breaths below the right costal margin. Her laboratory evaluation reveals a total bilirubin of 224 umol/L, ALAT of 3124 U/L, and an INR of 1.4. You think of autoimmune hepatitis. Which laboratory test is appropriate?
 - A. **Antinuclear (ANA) and antismooth muscle antibodies (ASMA)**
 - B. Antimitochondrial antibodies (AMA) and total lipid profile
 - C. Antibodies to soluble liver antigen (SLA)
 - D. Serum IgM
 - E. Anti liver-kidney-microsomal (LKM-1) antibodies

2

- Which diagnostic procedure is a requirement to diagnose autoimmune hepatitis
 - 1. Ultrasound
 - 2. **Liver biopsy**
 - 3. Magnetic cholangiopancreaticography
 - 4. Fibroscan

3

- You have diagnosed autoimmune hepatitis 12 months ago with a 64-year-old female and started treatment. She will visit your out-patient clinic. What is the best set of parameters to judge whether the autoimmune hepatitis is in remission?
 1. Bilirubine & creatinine
 2. ASAT & immunoglobulin M
 3. Bilirubin & albumin
 4. **ALAT & immunoglobulin G**

4

- A 28 yr. old female presents for evaluation of abnormal liver-associated enzymes. Overall, she feels well and the physical exam is unremarkable. Labs reveal ASAT of 2124 U/L, ALAT of 2256 U/L, ANA and ASMA are positive. Liver biopsy shows severe panlobular necrosis. Which one of the following is the appropriate next step?
 - A. Begin azathioprine as monotherapy of 50 mg daily until remission achieved.
 - B. Begin cyclosporine 100 mg twice daily in combination with mycophenolate 500 mg twice daily.
 - C. Refer patient for liver transplant evaluation
 - D. **Begin prednisone 30 mg daily**
 - E. Repeat liver associated enzymes in 3-4 weeks prior to making treatment decisions

Multiple Choice Questions

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Auto immune hepatitis

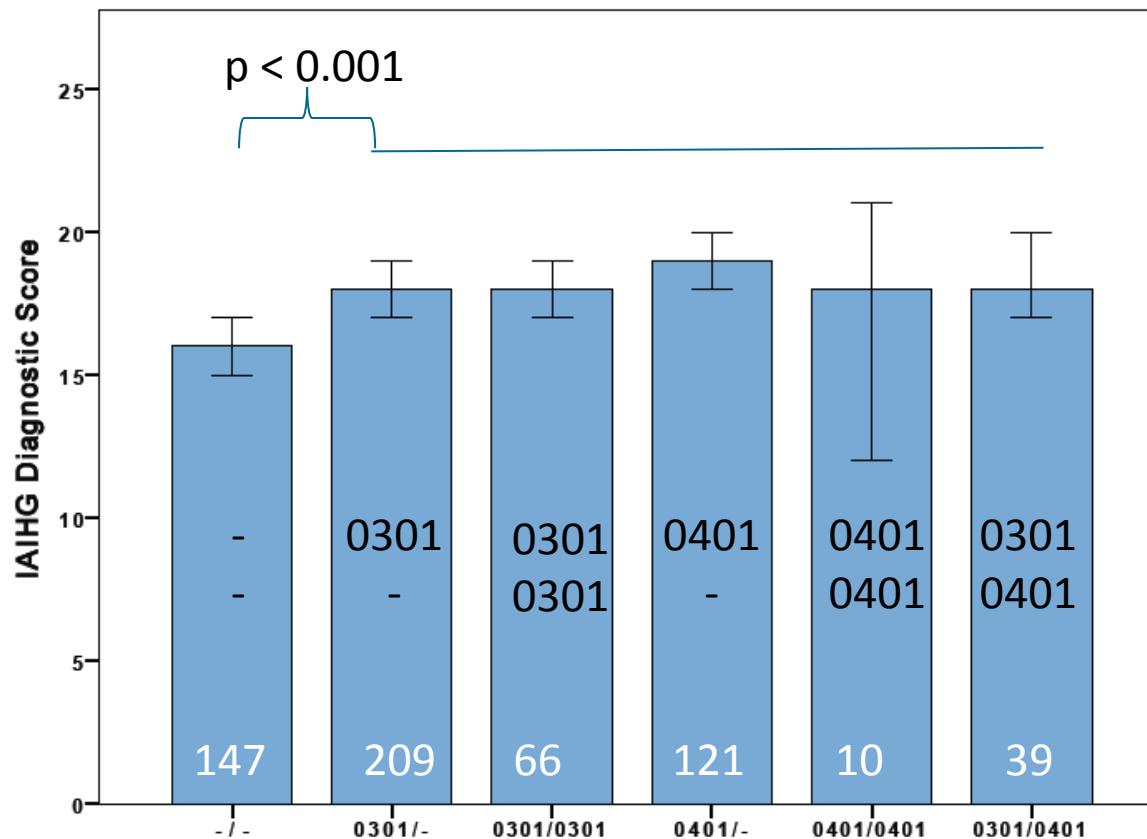
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21 t/m 23 juni a.s. zal de Dutch (Flamish) Liver Week plaatsvinden
in Hampshire Hotel Fitland Leiden

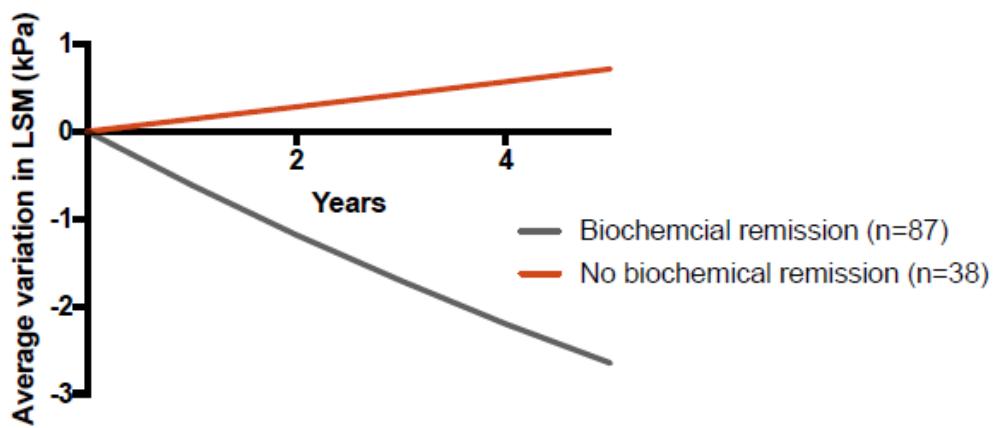
Phenotypic effect of HLA DRB1



- 649 Dutch AIH type-1 patients;
- 75%: HLA-DRB1*04:01 or *03:01 positive
- Mutation positives have higher revised International Autoimmune Hepatitis Group (IAIHG) scores

Conclusion

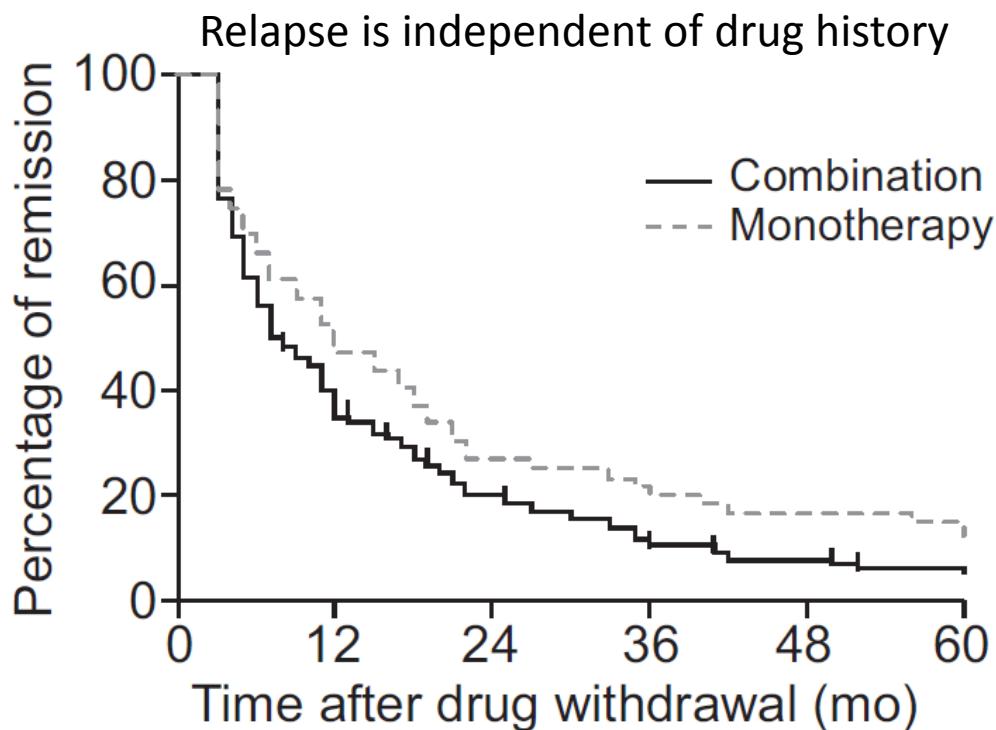
- AIH is a clinical diagnosis
- The diagnosis of AIH relies particularly on presence of autoantibodies, hypergammaglobulinemia and typical or compatible histology (**II-2**)
- Prompt and timely diagnosis is crucial as untreated AIH has a high mortality rate (**I**)
- Histological demonstration of hepatitis is a prerequisite for the diagnosis of AIH and needs to be part of the initial diagnostic work-up (**II-2**)
- AIH is associated with a broad variety of other autoimmune diseases (**II-2**)
- Association with HLA-genes DR3 or DR4
- The simplified IAIHG scoring system is useful for clinical practice (**II-2**)
- All patients with active AIH should be treated (**I**)
- Dosage of therapy should be adapted to the activity of the disease (**III**)



Pregnancy & AIH

- Allow pregnancy in AIH
 - Cave AIH cirrhosis with portal hypertension
- Continue treatment
 - Azathioprine (can be detected in colostrum)
 - MMF is contraindicated in pregnancy
- Disease behavior
 - AIH goes into remission with pregnancy
 - Gestational flare unlikely (<5%)
 - Post partum flare occurs (~25%)
- Outcome
 - AIH cirrhosis: high fetal loss
 - Lower MELD scores : better outcome

Risk factors for relapse



Features	HR	95% CI	P value
Concomitant autoimmune disease	0.55	0.37-0.83	0.04
Age <45 years at tapering of medication	1.53	1.05-2.2	0.03

Diagnostic features of the overlap syndromes of autoimmune hepatitis

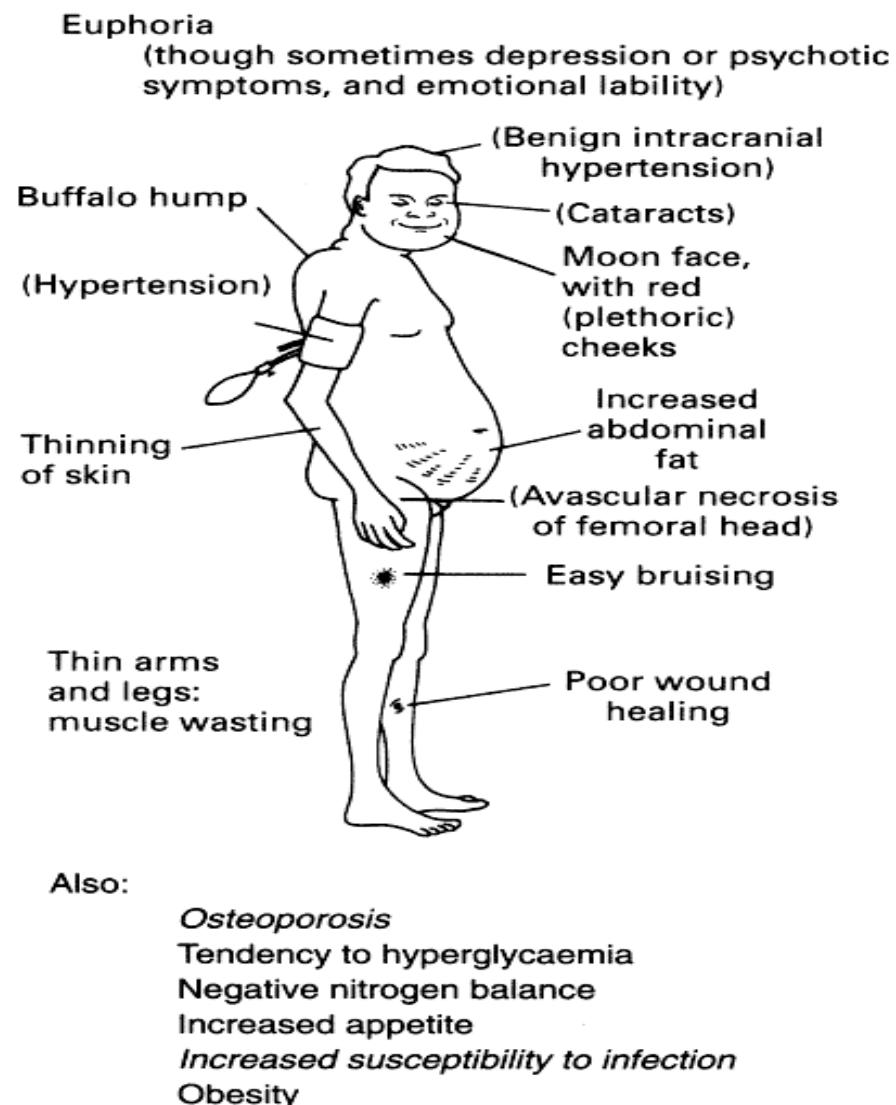
Overlap syndrome	Laboratory features	Serological features	Histological features	Cholangiographic findings
AIH-PBC	Consistent with Paris criteria*(19,30) Mild forms may have AP $\leq 2 \times$ ULN (2,6)	AMA positive (2)	Interface hepatitis (30) Destructive cholangitis (florid duct lesions) (30)	Normal (6)
AIH-PSC	AST/ALT>ULN (2) γ -globulin and IgG >ULN (2) AP or GGT>ULN (2)	AMA negative (2)	Interface hepatitis (34) Ductopenia (34) Portal edema or fibrous (34) Obliterative fibrous cholangitis (rare) (34)	Bile duct strictures(2,18,20,72)
AIH-cholestatic syndrome	AST/ALT>ULN (2) γ -globulin and IgG >ULN (2) AP or GGT >ULN (2)	AMA negative (2)	Interface hepatitis (34) Destructive cholangitis or bile duct loss (11,27)	Normal (2,11,27)

Side effects

Prednisone / Azathioprine

Steroid side effects

- **Mild but frequent (80%)**
 - Facial rounding, Weight gain
 - Dorsal hump striae
 - Hirsutism, Alopecia
 - Emotional Instability,
 - Glucose intolerance, Cataract
- **Severe but infrequent (13%)**
 - Osteopenia
 - Vertebral compression
 - Diabetes
 - Psychosis,
 - Hypertension



Azathioprine side effects

- **Idiosyncratic reactions: 8%**
 - nausea
- **Hypersensitivity reactions: 5-10%**
 - fever, chills, arthralgias, myalgias, cutaneous eruptions
- **Infections: 7%**
 - opportunistic infections (OR: 3.1; 95% CI: 1.7–5.5)
- **Myelosuppression: 2-5%**
 - leukopenia (2–4%), anemia (0.9%) thrombocytopenia (0.2%)
- **Liver toxicity 0.5%**
 - Nodular regenerative hyperplasia
- **Pancreatitis 4%**
- **Malignancy**
 - Skin cancer, lymphoma

Azathioprine side effects

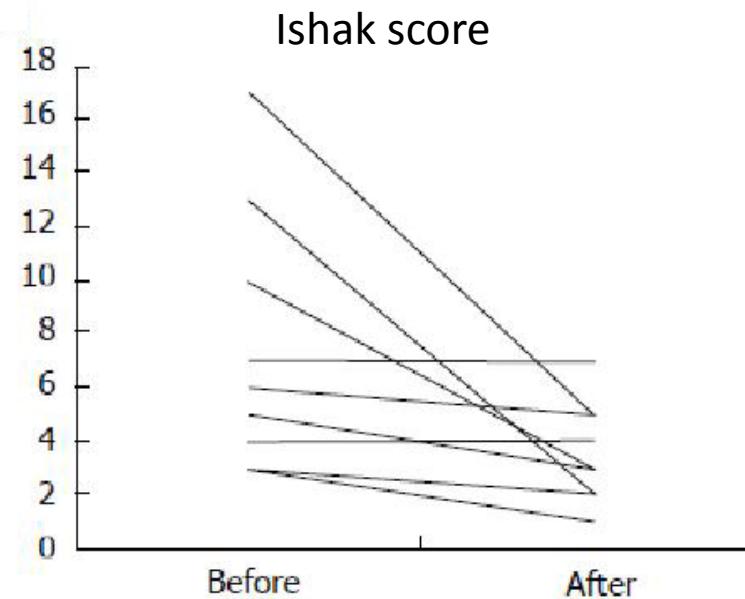
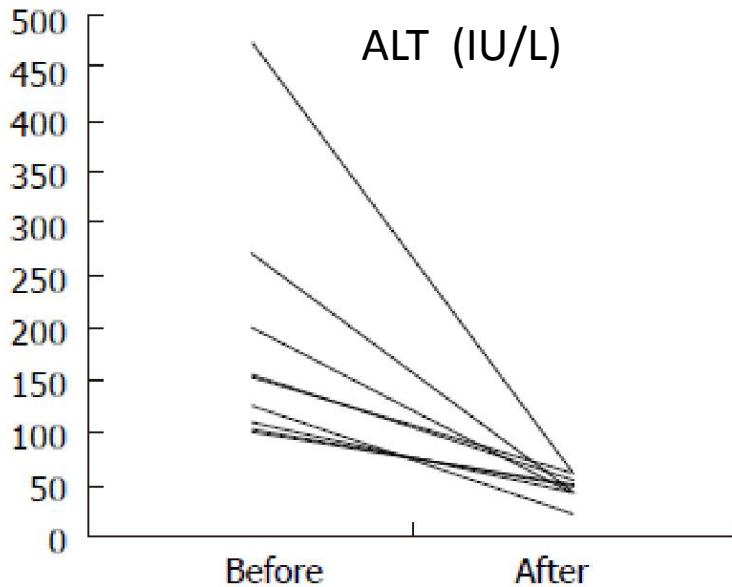
Age (years)	Annual incidence rate		
	<i>Continuing</i>	<i>Discontinued</i>	<i>Never received</i>
<50	0.37	0	0
50–65	2.58	0.66	0.40
>65	5.41	1.88	1.68

Risk of lymphoma

Age (years)	Annual incidence rate		
	<i>Continuing</i>	<i>Discontinued</i>	<i>Never received</i>
<50	0.66	0.38	0
50–65	2.59	1.96	0.60
>65	4.04	5.70	0.84

Risk of non-melanoma skin cancer

Tacrolimus



- 9 patients; follow up 18 months (12-37)
- tacrolimus in addition to prednisolone and azathioprin or mycophenolate mofetil.

Auto immune hepatitis

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December 5, 2015

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