Evaluating the efficacy and safety of 6-week extended interval dosing of natalizumab via a prospective, controlled, randomized, open-label, rater-blinded phase 3b study

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Introduction: Natalizumab, a highly efficacious therapy for relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis (RRMS), is also associated with progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML) risk. A recent analysis of the TOUCH dataset demonstrated that extended interval dosing (EID) is associated with significantly lower PML risk in anti–JC virus antibody positive patients. There have been no randomized studies to assess EID efficacy.

Objective: To describe the design of a phase 3b study to evaluate the efficacy of EID natalizumab initiated after a stable period of standard interval dosing (SID) compared with continuing SID.

Methods: A prospective, interventional, controlled, randomized, open-label, rater-blinded, global study will be conducted. Eligibility requirements include age 18-60, Expanded Disability Status Scale ≤5.5, RRMS, stable on SID natalizumab for ≥1 year with no relapses in the prior year, no prior immunosuppressant use, and no gadolinium-enhancing (Gd+) lesions at screening. Patients will be randomized 1:1 to natalizumab SID (every 4 weeks) or EID (every 6 weeks). Study duration will be 88 weeks (4-week screening, 72 weeks randomized treatment, 12 weeks follow-up). The primary endpoint is number of new/newly enlarging T2 lesions at 48 weeks. Key secondary endpoints include time to relapse, relapse rate, number of new radiologic lesions, and incidence of serious adverse events. Exploratory endpoints include Timed 25-Foot Walk, Nine-Hole Peg Test, Symbol Digit Modality Test, and confirmed disability worsening or
improvement. Data on natalizumab serum concentration, alpha-4 integrin saturation, lymphocyte counts, and body weight will be collected to explore relationships between pharmacokinetics/pharmacodynamics and efficacy.

**Results:** Approximately 480 patients will be enrolled. The rationale for study sample size, inclusion criteria, dosing intervals, and endpoints will be presented.

**Conclusions:** This study will provide the first randomized, controlled efficacy data for patients treated with EID natalizumab and will inform on the potential of EID as a future PML risk mitigation strategy.

**Abstract word count:** 297 (limit 300 words)

**Short title:** Natalizumab EID efficacy study design

**Short title character count:** 37 (limit 45 characters including spaces)

**Disclosures:**

Supported by Biogen.

NC, ZR, RK, GS, IC, P-RH: employees of and may hold stock and/or stock options in Biogen.

JC: scientific advisory board and/or consultant for Adamas, Celgene, Convelo, EMD Serono, Novartis, and PendoPharm; speaker honorarium from Mylan.

HW: honoraria from AbbVie, Actelion, Alexion, Biogen, Cognomed, Evgen, F. Hoffmann-La Roche, MedDay, Merck Serono, Novartis, Roche Pharma AG, Sanofi Genzyme, Teva; research support from Biogen, GlaxoSmithKline GmbH, Roche Pharma AG, Sanofi Genzyme.

JF: personal compensation and compensation for consulting activities from Biogen, Genentech, Genzyme, and Teva.

HB: personal compensation for consulting from Biogen, Merck Serono, Novartis; research support from Biogen, Merck Serono.

LZR: personal compensation from Biogen and Teva for speaker and advisory board activities; research support from Biogen.

GG: steering committees for AbbVie, Atara, Biogen, Novartis, Roche, Teva; consulting fees from Biogen, Canbex, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck Serono, Novartis, Roche, Sanofi Genzyme, Synthon.

DA: equity interest in NeuroRx Research; personal compensation from Acorda Therapeutics, Biogen, EMD Serono, Genentech, Genzyme, Hoffmann-La Roche, MedImmune, Mitsubishi, Novartis, Receptos, and Sanofi-Aventis; research grants from Biogen and Novartis.
2018 Charcot Foundation abstract: Natalizumab EID efficacy study design

GD: personal compensation for scientific advisory boards and funding for travel and/or speaker honoraria from Biogen, Merck-Serono, Novartis, Sanofi-Genzyme, and Teva; institutional research grants from Biogen, Merck-Serono, Novartis, and Sanofi Genzyme.

JK: speaker and consulting fees from Biogen, Genzyme, Merck Serono, Novartis, Roche and TEVA.

GC: has served on data and safety monitoring boards for AMO Pharmaceuticals, Apotek, Horizon Pharmaceuticals, Merck, Merck/Pfizer, Modigenetech/Prolor, Neurim, Opko Biologics, Reata, Receptos/Celgene, Sanofi, Teva, NHLBI (Protocol Review Committee), and NICHD (OPRU oversight committee); has received compensation for consulting or advisory board service from Argenix, Atara Biotherapeutics, Bioeq GmBH, the Consortium of MS Centers (grant), Genzyme, Genentech, Innate Therapeutics, Klein-Buendel, MedDay, Medimmune, Novartis, Opexa Therapeutics, Roche, Savara, Somahlution, Teva, TG Therapeutics, and Transparency Life Sciences; and is president of Pythagoras, a private consulting company.