Reviewer's report

Title: Natalizumab treatment for multiple sclerosis: Middle East and North Africa regional recommendations for patient selection and monitoring

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Reviewer: Dana Horakova

Reviewer's report:

Comments to the Author

In this review a group of neurologists with expertise in the field of MS created a set of recommendations for local neurologists for the appropriate use of natalizumab in the Middle East and North Africa regions where natalizumab has recently been registered.

They reviewed evidence on the efficacy of natalizumab, its positioning in the MS treatment algorithm, including selection criteria, and the risk of PML. The emphasises are put on a routine safety monitoring, early recognition and timely management of PML.

The review is balanced and summarizes important issues related to natalizumab treatment.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. In the section Regional recommendation the authors recommend more frequent MRI scans (every 4-6 months) in a high risk group of patients (JCV Ab+, previous immunosuppressant and more then 24 months of natalizumab treatment). As the risk of PML is really high (1:90 treated patients), the generally recommended window is 3-4 months. I suggest to the authors to consider this interval for MRI monitoring in the high risk group.

2. The authors did not discuss the issue of withdrawal of natalizumab. There is a significant risk of severe rebound activity of the disease in some patients. I would recommend to briefly address this topic.

3. One more suggestion is to add a short paragraph about the use of natalizumab in a pediatric cohort.

Minor Essential Revisions

I have no minor comments.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests