Reviewer's report

Title: Deterioration after corticosteroids in CIDP may be associated with focal demyelination pattern

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Reviewer: Eduardo N Nobile-Orazio

Reviewer's report:

This is a very interesting report addressing the possible reason for deterioration after steroid treatment in patients with CIDP. The authors correlated this aspect with two of the main features previously associated with deterioration after steroid therapy, i.e. the predominant or purely motor impairment and the deterioration after steroids observed in patients with multifocal motor neuropathy. This study may have relevant practical implication in the choice of the initial treatment in patients with CIDP.

Major compulsory revisions.

Even if all patients had a diagnosis of CIDP according to the EFNS/PNS criteria, I think that the authors should also analyse the pattern of clinical distribution of the patients and particularly how many patients in both groups had an asymmetric impairment, and whether some patients had weakness more related to a mononeuritis multiplex type of impairment. They should also report whether there was a different distribution of impairment between upper and lower limbs. This can be easily analysed reviewing the MRC data of their patients. The EFNS/PNS criteria are indeed excellent for the diagnosis of CIDP even if they do not always allow to avoid a wrong diagnosis. This was also the experience of the authors of this study who had to change diagnosis during the follow-up in 7 out of their 40 treated patients.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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