Author’s response to reviews

Title: Trends in lipid profiles in patients with psoriasis: a population-based analysis

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Reviewer 1 (Aldona Pietrzak) rebuttal

1) In response to the reviewer’s suggestions 1&2, subgroup analyses were performed for males and females, as well as statin users. Statin users experienced greater declines in total cholesterol and LDL compared with non-users, as expected. However, there were no differences in the trends in lipids between the psoriasis and non-psoriasis groups in any of the subgroups. This has been included in the results section.

2) We apologize for the technical error. We have incorporated the images into the manuscript and will also upload them separately.

3) We have attempted to rewrite the results and discussion section to keep with the data and analyses. We thank the reviewer for the suggestion.

4) A metaanalysis is beyond the scope of our study.

Reviewer 2 (Arnon Cohen) rebuttal

1) We have attempted to shorten the discussion as much as possible while also presenting all aspects of the study findings that would be of interest to researchers and clinicians.

2) We will incorporate the images into the manuscript before submission.

Reviewer 3 (Ole Ahlehoff) rebuttal

1) The date of onset of psoriasis was determined by a review of the complete medical records of all subjects, and psoriasis was validated by either a confirmatory diagnosis in the medical record by a dermatologist, or a physician’s description of the lesions in the medical record or a skin biopsy, whenever available. We understand that in some cases there may have been some elapsed time before a patient brings the disease to medical attention, but it would be very difficult to ascertain to the day when the disease truly begins as some patients may have rashes that may never have been noticed. As we include analyses before and after the index date, we do not feel that this aspect of the diagnosis affects the results much.

2) We picked age 35 as the cutoff as the USPTF strongly recommends screening men aged 35 and older for lipid disorders. (http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/uspschol.htm). We used this lower cut off age for women as well in the study.

3) As other cardiovascular comorbidities were not part of our investigation in this study they were not included in the table.

4) Many patients with psoriasis do not receive screening lipid profiles. It is certainly possible that using 3 median measurements of lipids may not
reflect their true profiles but this method ensured that patients in the study had at least one lipid measure to base the analyses on.

5) The effect of temporary changes in lipid profiles is beyond the scope of this study.

6) We did not look at the effects of the choice of cholesterol lowering drug on lipids.

7) Skin severity scores were not available to us and therefore we did analyze the data based on disease severity.

8) There were low patient numbers who received systemic therapy. In our opinion, the patients with severe psoriasis constitute a very small minority and probably do not contribute much to the overall trends seen in the populations of patients with psoriasis in our study.

Editorial comments

1) We have added an acknowledgment section and included this in our manuscript.