Reviewer's report

Title: Early predictors of response and drug survival in ankylosing spondylitis patients treated with infliximab

Version: 2 Date: 3 February 2015

Reviewer: Maria Sole Chimenti

Reviewer's report:

Dear Editor,

the investigation of early predictors of response and drug survival in AS patients treated with infliximab is a current topic and represent a need in daily clinical practice. AS patients treated with infliximab for 5 years is an interesting field and adds relevant findings in the management of these treated patients.

The relevance of the manuscript is high and the study is well defined. The authors gave important information regarding the role of infliximab treatment. Methods are appropriate and figures are genuine. The manuscript has a relevant standard for data deposition. The discussion and conclusions are balanced and well supported by the presented data and the writing is acceptable.

No major revisions are required.

Minor revision:

1) Please add in the methods and in the table with clinical characteristics if patients had extra-articular manifestations and include them in the text as well as the related treatment response.

2) In my opinion, authors need to include in the introduction and in the methods if patients performed home-based exercises or a physiotherapy programme and incorporate the variable if present. This may influence, in 5 years, the data, including disease activity, disease duration, quality of life and treatments regimen. This is particularly relevant for patients with a disease like AS.

3) are there data concerning the sustained improvement in quality of life or work ability?

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 don't have competition interests