Reviewer's report

Title: Efficacy of subcutaneous tocilizumab in patients with rheumatoid arthritis and systemic sclerosis overlap syndrome: A report of two cases and review of the literature

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Reviewer: PETER YOUSSEF

Reviewer's report:

The authors present 2 interesting cases of rheumatoid arthritis and systemic sclerosis overlap who respond to tocilizumab (Toci). The skin response in case 1 is surprisingly good and much better than one would expect from the Toci studies. The second case is more typical. The cases are worth publishing. The review does not add much to a shortened discussion of the literature.

The authors are incorrect when they state that IL-6 plays a major role in SSc as the effects of treatment are modest at best. The discussion otherwise reflects the literature.

The introduction repeats a significant part of the discussion and could be greatly shortened.

There are some typographical problems

Abstract:
"Conclusion: Tocilizumab may be more effective in patients with RA and SSc overlap syndrome for which conventional treatment is inadequate."

This statement is inaccurate as the authors do not state what the comparator was that Toci was more effective than. Do they mean more effective than conventional dMARDs.

Introduction
"IL-6 expression is reportedly high in both the skin and serum of SSc patients, and its elevation depends on the skin sclerosis."

Do the authors mean that IL-6 in the serum correlates with the skin score?
Case 1

'Sclerema’ do the authors mean scleroderma

mRTSS should be mRSS

Figure 1 is not required.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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