

Nemolizumab beats placebo for reduction of pruritus in eczema

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(HealthDay)—For patients with atopic dermatitis and moderate-to-

severe pruritus, nemolizumab results in a greater reduction in pruritus than placebo, according to a study published in the July 9 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Kenji Kabashima, M.D., Ph.D., from Kyoto University in Japan, and colleagues conducted a 16-week randomized trial involving Japanese [patients](#) with [atopic dermatitis](#) and moderate-to-severe pruritus and inadequate response to topical agents. Participants were randomly assigned to receive either subcutaneous nemolizumab or [placebo](#) in a 2:1 ratio (143 and 72 patients) with concomitant topical agents. The mean percent change in the visual analog scale (VAS) score for pruritus was the primary end point.

The researchers found that the mean percent change in the VAS score at week 16 was -42.8 and -21.4 percent in the nemolizumab and placebo groups, respectively (difference, -21.5 percentage points). The mean percent change in the Eczema Area and Severity Index score was -45.9 and -33.2 percent with nemolizumab and placebo, respectively. The percentage of patients with a score of 4 or less on the Dermatology Life Quality Index was 40 and 22 percent in the nemolizumab and placebo groups, while 55 and 21 percent, respectively, had an Insomnia Severity Index score of 7 or less.

"Nemolizumab plus topical agents may ameliorate both pruritus and signs of eczema and may lessen the severity of atopic dermatitis by disrupting the itch-scratch cycle," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to Maruho, which funded the study.

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