Survival up with tocilizumab in ventilated COVID-19 patients

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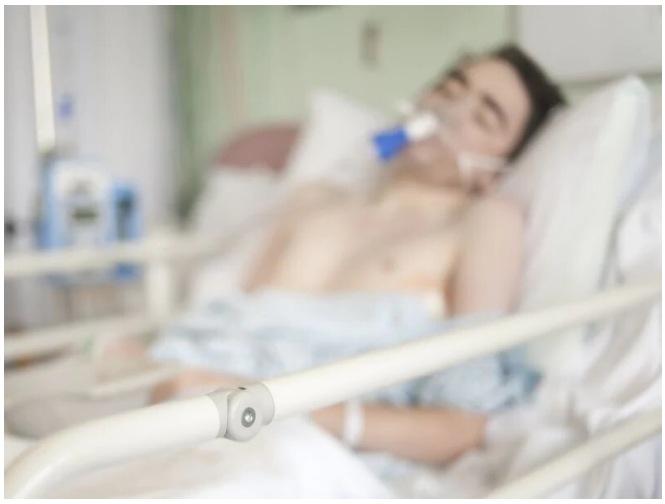

(HealthDay)—For patients with COVID-19 requiring mechanical ventilation, tocilizumab is associated with improved survival, according to a study published online July 11 in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

Emily C. Somers, Ph.D., from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and colleagues examined the effectiveness and safety of interleukin (IL)-6 blockade with tocilizumab in a single-center cohort of patients with COVID-19 requiring mechanical ventilation. A total of 154 patients were included, of whom 78 received tocilizumab; patients were followed for a median of 47 days.

The researchers found that tocilizumab-treated patients were younger, were less likely to have chronic pulmonary disease, and had lower D-dimer values at intubation. Tocilizumab was associated with a reduction in the risk for death in propensity score inverse probability weight-adjusted models (hazard ratio, 0.55) and improved status on the ordinal outcome scale (odds ratio, 0.58 per one-level increase). Tocilizumab was associated with an increased proportion of patients with superinfections (54 versus 26 percent); the 28-day case fatality rate did not differ for tocilizumab-treated patients with versus without superinfection (22 versus 15 percent).

"These data are encouraging and can help to inform clinical practice while results from randomized controlled trials of IL-6 inhibitors are awaited," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical and other industries.

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