

Assessing the Safety Profile of mRNA-Based Vaccines in Patients with Autoimmune Inflammatory Rheumatic Diseases

A case series assessing the safety profile of mRNA-based vaccines in patients with autoimmune inflammatory rheumatic diseases (AIIRD) has been published in the journal *Rheumatology*. The study's

authors aim to raise awareness of reactivation of herpes zoster (HZ) following the BNT162b2 mRNA vaccination in patients with AIIRD.



The researchers found the occurrence of HZ was 1.2% (n = 6) in patients with AIIRD compared with none in the control group. The 6 patients who developed HZ were females aged 49 ± 11 years with stable AIIRD: rheumatoid arthritis (n = 4), Sjogren's syndrome (n = 1), and undifferentiated connective disease (n = 1). Five of the patients developed a first-in-a-lifetime occurrence of HZ within a short period after the first vaccine dose and in one case, HZ occurred after the second dose. Five of the patients completed the second vaccine dose with no other undesirable effects. In most of the cases, HZ infection was mild.

Additional epidemiologic studies on the safety of the mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccines in patients with AIIRD are needed to determine the association between the BNT162b2 mRNA vaccination and HZ reactivation.

Read the full study in *Rheumatology*.

Read more on LDA's COVID & Lyme Disease page.