

**Seven-years Outcome of Biopsy-proven Lupus Nephritis after Treatment with the Step-down Bridge Protocol of Intravenous and Oral Combination of 5 Immunosuppressants - Prospective Observational Analysis of Efficacies and Adverse Effects.**

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## Abstract.

**Objective.** To assess 7 years outcome of Biopsy-proven Lupus Nephritis.

**Materials and Methods.** The 35 consecutive patients with Biopsy-proven WHO Class III, IV, and V Lupus Nephritis were enrolled in a 7-years prospective observational study. The Step-down Bridge Protocol of Intravenous and Oral Combination of 5 Immunosuppressants was empirically applied when the SLAM Score was  $> 4$ , Chronicity Index  $< 5$  or Lupus Prognosis Index  $\leq 5$ , and ESR  $> 40$  mm.

**Results.** Remission was induced by the intravenous therapy in 2-4 months. Remission with oral Drugs was achieved in 5.5-7.5 months after the intravenous therapy was tapered off. Remission was consolidated for at least 2 years, before tapering off oral drugs over 1 year. Remission without Drug was ultimately obtained after 3.5 – 4.5 years in Immunosuppressant-naïve Lupus Nephritis. Not immunosuppressant-naïve Lupus Nephritis remained in Remission with oral Drugs for the rest of the study. Outcome of renal biopsy of WHO Class I was achieved from baseline Classes III to V. The outcome of the SLAM Score was  $0.1 \pm 0.0$  with 95% Confidence Interval of 83.2 to 92.2% at 7 years. The P value of the difference between baseline SLAM Score and outcome was 90.85%.

**Conclusion.** Remission with oral Drugs was induced by intravenous therapy and ultimately Remission without Drug was achieved in Immunosuppressant-naïve Lupus Nephritis. Not Immunosuppressant-naïve Lupus Nephritis remained in Remission with oral Drugs. Renal histological normalization was acquired at 7 years.

<b>Key words:</b>	Biopsy-proven Lupus Nephritis	Immunosuppressant-naivety
	Clinical Outcome	Histological Outcome
	Remission with oral Drugs	Remission without Drug.