Tolerability of a shortened uptitration scheme with a high-dose hypoallergenic grass pollen preparation

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Background

Subcutaneous specific immunotherapy (SCIT) with grass pollen preparations is a treatment option in pollen allergic rhinitis. Conventional SCIT protocols contain an initial uptitration phase with increasing doses of allergen extract injections in weekly intervals followed by the maintenance dose period. An accelerated therapeutic scheme could achieve the therapeutic target in less time and with fewer injections. Therefore we assessed the tolerability of a shortened uptitration scheme in a clinical trial.

Methods

In a multicentre, open label, phase II trial with 2 parallel active treatment groups, 122 patients (Safety Set; Table 1) were 1:1 randomised to receive either 4 (group I; shortened uptitration scheme) or 7 (group II; standard uptitration scheme) initial injections (Figure 1). Both treatment groups received 2 additional maintenance doses. Investigators and patients assessed separately the tolerability after therapy by use of a 5 point Likert scale.

Results

Investigators rated the treatment tolerability (Figure 2) as good or very good for 53 (86.9 %) patients of group I and for 59 (100 %) patients of group II. In group I 48 patients (80.0 %) and in group II 54 patients (91.5 %) rated the treatment tolerability as good or very good (Figure 3). The majority of patients in both groups (group I = 75.4 %; group II = 88.5 %) reached the maintenance dose without back dosing (Figure 4).

Conclusion

The tolerability of the shortened uptitration scheme for SCIT with this high-dose hypoallergenic grass pollen preparation is as accepted by physicians and patients as the standard scheme. It offers convenient flexibility for patients who prefer less visits and injections.