

Repurposing Diacerein and Pentoxifylline to Manage Para COVID-19 Syndrome

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The persistence of troublesome symptoms, affecting different body systems, for more than three weeks after the diagnosis of COVID-19 was suggested to be named Post COVID syndrome with an incidence of 10 – 35% for non-hospitalized patients and up to 85% for the hospitalized ones(1). Furthermore, a study has suggested that 50% of COVID-19 patients might experience persistent symptoms for 10-14 weeks after disease onset(2). Notably, we suggested that Para COVID syndrome might be a more accurate nomenclature and we will adopt it(3).

Relying on our academic expertise and our real-life daily clinical practice, we suggest that COVID-19 non-targeted treatment might be revealed as the main cause of Para COVID syndrome(4). Notably, intake of oral, parenteral and/or inhalational, corticosteroids as well as favipiravir to manage mild-moderate COVID-19 was reported by most of our managed Para COVID patients and one has also reported, in addition to oral and parenteral corticosteroids, linezolid intake though no blood culture was performed, and her clinical condition did not warrant its prescription, as we suggest, which might have added to the immunosuppressive effects of corticosteroids(5).

We have repurposed diacerein; a well-known symptomatic slow-acting anti-inflammatory and immunomodulatory drug used in osteoarthritis(6), with or without NSAIDs, to safely manage our Para COVID patients mostly complaining of persistent cough, marked fatigue, chest pain, exercise intolerance and they reported marked improvement starting from the first week of therapy. We suggest that diacerein possesses the same potential properties(6) that we have built upon our COVID-19 management protocol(7) and we might consider the use of diacerein for our COVID-19 patients who might not tolerate NSAIDs due to peptic ulcers(8). Furthermore, we suggest that pentoxifylline should be also considered as another safe alternative for management of Para COVID(9) and we have previously used it as an adjuvant treatment while managing selected cases of COVID(10).

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