THE CCR9/CCL25 AXIS IS SPECIFIC TO THE ILEUM AND IS CORRELATED WITH STRICTURING DISEASE

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Transcriptomic analysis of 611 Crohn's disease patients identifies the CCR9/CCL25 chemokine axis as specifically expressed in the terminal ileum and upregulated in penetrating and stricturing disease, suggesting a potential therapeutic target for small bowel Crohn's disease.

KEY POINTS

- CCR9 and its ligand CCL25 showed expression specific to the terminal ileum with minimal activity in the colon, in contrast to the ubiquitous gut expression of vedolizumab targets ITGA4, ITGB7, and MADCAM1
- CCL25 expression was significantly increased in patients with penetrating and stricturing Crohn's disease, a high-impact disease feature associated with ileal disease that represents an unmet need
- An expression quantitative trait locus upstream of the CCL25 promoter was linked to small bowel CCL25 expression
- The findings suggest that small bowel Crohn's disease may have been incompletely targeted by small molecule inhibitors to date and support exploring CCR9/CCL25 axis therapies
- All authors were AstraZeneca employees holding company stocks during the study

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