

BREAKING THERAPEUTIC BARRIERS IN CROHN'S DISEASE: BONE MARROW STEM CELL THERAPY FOR COMPLEX PERIANAL FISTULAS — A PROSPECTIVE REAL-WORLD STUDY

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A single-center study of 34 Crohn's disease patients with refractory complex perianal fistulas treated with autologous bone marrow-derived mesenchymal stem cells showed 64.7% complete closure at 24 weeks with no serious adverse events.

KEY POINTS

- At 24 weeks, 64.7% of patients achieved durable complete closure of external fistulous openings and 20.6% maintained partial healing, yielding an overall clinical response rate of 85.3%.
- MRI evaluation showed reduction in active fistulous tracts in 73.5% of patients by week 12 and complete disappearance of tracts in 58.8% by week 24.
- CRP levels decreased from 13.8 ± 7.2 mg/L at baseline to 3.9 ± 2.1 mg/L at 24 weeks, CDAI scores improved from 176.2 ± 48.7 to 122.4 ± 35.1 , and quality of life improved by 34% (all $p < 0.001$).
- No serious adverse events or systemic infections occurred; mild transient local pain at injection site was reported in 8.8% of patients.
- The authors conclude that larger multicenter randomized controlled trials are warranted to validate these findings.

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