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Summary

ANTI-FIBROTIC EFFECTS INDUCED BY FILGOTINIB IN ULCERATIVE COLITIS PATIENTS DETECTED BY MOLECULAR ANALYSIS AND FAPI PET/CT: THE INTERACT TRIAL

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Histopathology | Surgery | Radiology & Imaging | Mechanisms & Personalised Medicine | Immunology | IBD

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The INTERACT study is the first to demonstrate that filgotinib treatment in ulcerative colitis leads to inhibition of fibrosis-associated cellular pathways and reduced ^{68}Ga-FAPi-PET/CT tracer uptake, suggesting that this JAK-1 inhibitor influences intestinal fibrotic remodelling.

KEY POINTS

- In 12 UC patients treated with filgotinib for 24 weeks, single-cell RNA sequencing of paired mucosal biopsies showed reduced immune cell abundance (particularly Ig-producing B cells and inflammatory macrophages), impaired JAK-STAT signalling most prominently in myeloid cells, and decreased expression of extracellular matrix genes including collagens, laminins, and integrins in the stromal compartment.
- FAP RNA expression decreased after filgotinib treatment in 9 out of 10 patients, detected in endothelial cells and stromal fibroblast populations.
- Serial ^{68}Ga-FAPi-PET/CT imaging in a subset of 5 patients revealed reduced FAPi tracer uptake with decreases in both early (10–20 minutes post-injection) and late (50–70 minutes post-injection) standardized uptake values in affected colonic segments.
- The late-to-early SUV ratio decreased in 4 of 5 patients, suggesting reduced FAPi tracer retention and altered fibroblast activation-associated tracer kinetics following treatment.
- The findings support ^{68}Ga-FAPi-PET/CT as a candidate imaging tool for monitoring anti-fibrotic treatment effects in UC.
- One patient discontinued filgotinib at week 8 due to lack of clinical response; the study was funded by Alfasigma S.p.A.

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