

Systemic lupus erythematosus

Evaluation and prediction of relapse risk in stable systemic lupus erythematosus patients after glucocorticoid withdrawal (PRESS): an open-label, multicentre, non-inferiority, randomised controlled study in China

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<INTRODUCTION>

- SLE再燃率は8-45%と報告されている。
- EULARはGCをPSL 5mg以下の維持で、可能なら中止と推奨。
- SLE寛解達成後のGC減量中止方法や、どのような患者が中止可能かは不明。
- HCQの再燃抑制やDamage蓄積抑制効果は複数の報告がある
- **寛解かLLDASを維持できている安定したSLE患者において、GC中止後再燃リスクを明らかにするために、またHCQの再燃抑制効果を確認するために、多施設共同、非盲検RCTを非劣勢デザインで行った**

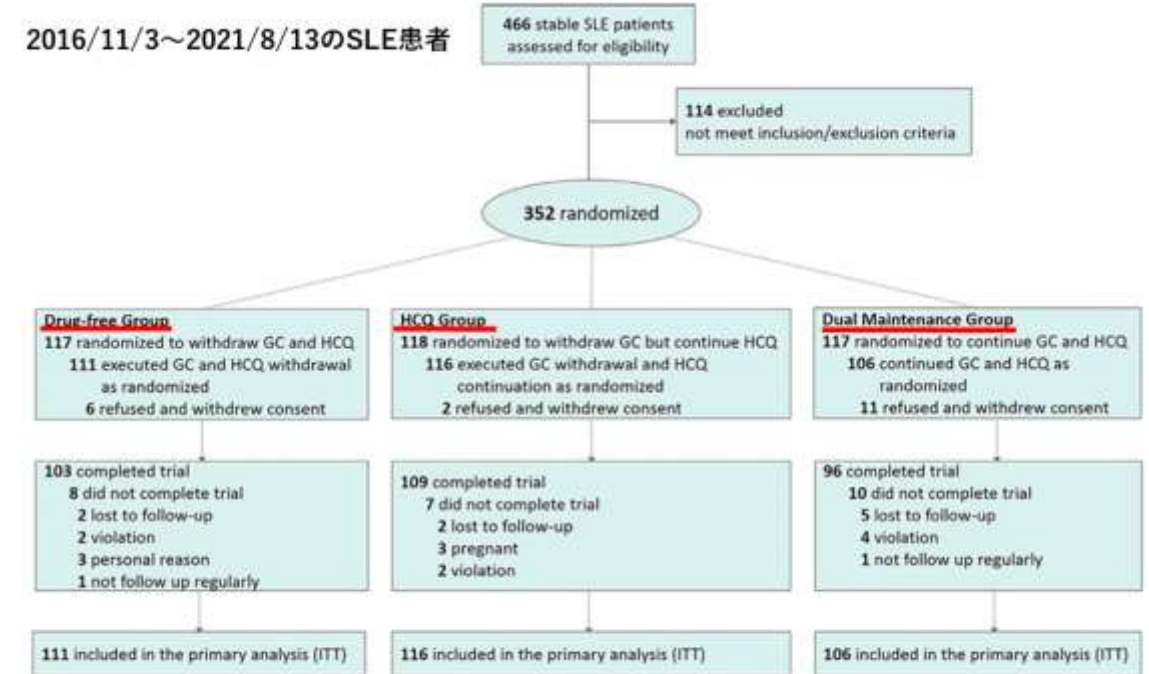


Figure 1. Study flow diagram. GC, glucocorticoids; HCQ, hydroxychloroquine; ITT, intention-to-treat analysis; SLE, systemic lupus erythematosus.

Inclusion Criteria

- 18-60歳
- 1年以上SELENA-SLEDAIが3以下を維持し、新規の臓器障害なし
- DNA抗体ほぼ正常（免疫蛍光法で陰性、ELISAで正常2倍以下）
- C3正常下限の0.5倍以上でC3のfluctuationが最近1年間で10%以内
- 尿蛋白量 $\leq 0.5\text{g/日}$
- PSL $\leq 7.5\text{mg/日}$ を6か月以上維持
- HCQ以外の免疫抑制薬を最近6か月は使用していない
- 生物学的製剤の使用歴なし
- 2年以内に重篤な臓器障害がないこと

Supplementary Figure 1.

Study Protocol

Drug freeとHCQグループは

GCをベースラインの1/4ずつ1週毎に減量し 4 週間で中止する

Drug free グループでは

HCQを即座に中止

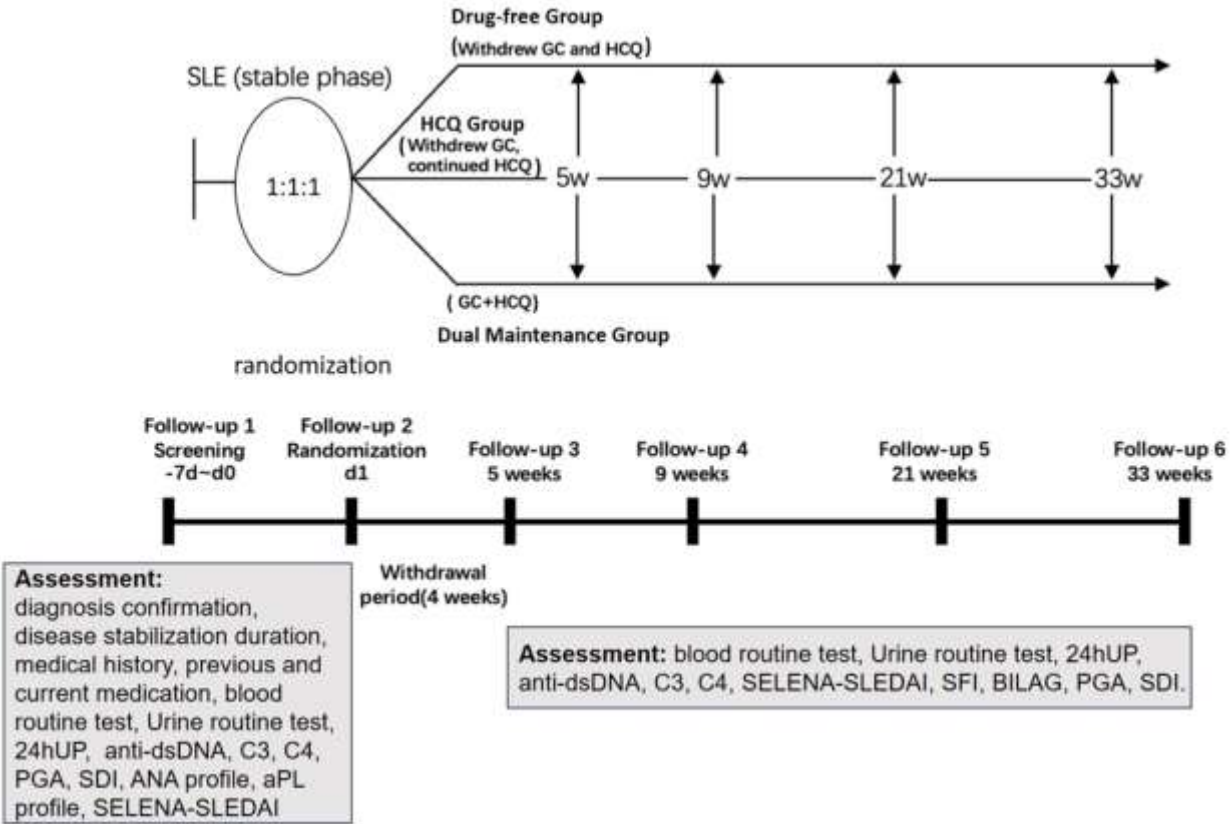
Dual Maintenanceグループでは

GCとHCQをそのまま続ける

Flareの定義： SFI (以下)とBILAG

Table 6. SELENA-SLEDAI flare index.

Mild/moderate flare	Severe flare
□ Change in SLEDAI > 3 points or □ New/worse discoid, photosensitive, profundus, cutaneous vasculitis, bullous lupus, Nasopharyngeal ulcers, Pleuritis, Pericarditis, Arthritis, or Fever (SLE) or □ Increase in Prednisone, <0.5 mg/kg/day or □ Added NSAID or Plaquenil □ ≥1.0 Increase in PGA, but not to more than 2.5	□ Change in SLEDAI > 12 or □ New/worse CNS-SLE; Vasculitis; Nephritis; Myositis; PLT < 60,000; Hemolytic anemia: Hb <7mg/dl or decrease in Hb > 3mg/dl; Requiring: double prednisone or Prednisone>0.5 mg/kg/day or hospitalization □ Prednisone >0.5 mg/kg/day or □ New Cytoxan, Azathioprine, Methotrexate, Hospitalization (SLE) □ Increase in PGA to > 2.5



Primary Endpoint

SFIで定義した再燃率

Secondary Endpoint

- SLEDAI<4の割合
- PGA変化の平均
- BILAG Bを1以上もつ患者割合
- SFI or BILAGによるsevere flareの割合
- SFI or BILAGによるmild/moderate flareの割合

Drop-outした患者はBOCF (baseline-observation carried forward)法および WOCF (worst observation carried forward)法で補完。

Statistical Analysis

Sample size calculation:

Dual maintenance group のrelapse rate 15% (at 33wk),
HCQ/drug-free groupのrelapse rate も同様と想定
significance level を片側 0.025、80%のpowerで設定すると各群89例
drop-outを20%と想定し**各群111例必要と計算した**

Two-parallel non-inferiority tests:

Drug-free vs dual maintenance group
HCQ group vs dual maintenance group
non-inferiority marginを15%の違いとした

すべての解析はITTを基本としている

Primary Endpointに関しては、Newcombe hybrid score interval methodを適用

Secondary Endpointの差に関しては、
Student t-test or Mann-Whitney U tests for continuous data
 χ^2 test or Fisher's exact tests for categorical data

Subgroup analysisではforest plotsで提示
Breslow-Day testでp値を各因子で算出
多変量解析はlogistic regressionを用いた

各グループの背景

Table 1

Baseline demographic and clinical characteristics of different groups

	Drug-free group (n = 111)	HCQ group (n = 116)	Dual maintenance group (n = 106)
Sex (female:male)	104:7	113:3	101:5
Average onset age (mean±SD, years)	35.3±10.1	34.7±10.3	34.4±10.7
Disease duration at enrolment (mean±SD, years)	8.0±5.6	7.2±4.5	7.4±4.5
SELENA-SLEDAI at enrolment (median, IQR)	0 (0, 2.0)	0 (0, 2.0)	0 (0, 2.0)
SELENA-SLEDAI at enrolment (mean±SD)	0.67±0.94	0.56±0.93	0.58±0.91
SELENA-SLEDAI at diagnosis (median, IQR)	9.0 (7.0, 11.0)	9.0 (6.0, 11.5)	9.0 (7.0, 12.0)
SELENA-SLEDAI at diagnosis (mean±SD)	9.86±4.14	9.16±3.93	10.37±5.01
GC dose at enrolment (mean±SD, mg)	4.37±1.98	4.06±1.97	4.13±2.01
Low-dose GC maintenance time (mean±SD, months)*	47.07±34.77	38.67±25.99	41.55±30.80
DORIS remission at enrolment (%)	57 (53.3)	72 (62.6)	59 (56.2)
History of Relapse (%)	21 (18.9)	26 (22.4)	23 (21.7)
System involvement and serological positivity in history			
Renal involvement (%)	49 (44.1)	44 (37.9)	42 (39.6)
Central nervous system involvement (%)	8 (7.2)	5 (4.3)	9 (8.5)
Haematological involvement (%)	62 (55.9)	54 (46.6)	57 (53.8)
Arthritis (%)	51 (45.9)	64 (55.2)	53 (50.0)
Rashes or mucosal ulceration (%)	77 (69.4)	80 (69.0)	78 (73.6)
Gastrointestinal tract involvement (%)	4 (3.6)	4 (3.4)	2 (1.9)
Hypocomplementaemia (%)	90 (81.1)	93 (80.2)	79 (74.5)
Anti-dsDNA positivity (%)	69 (62.2)	61 (52.6)	54 (50.9)
Antiphospholipid positivity† (%)	6/105 (5.7)	9/108 (8.4)	2/102 (2.0)
Anti-ribosomal P positivity‡ (%)	29 (26.1)	28/115 (24.3)	25 (24.0)

Primary
Endpoint

各群におけるSLE再燃率と、その差の検定

Figure 2

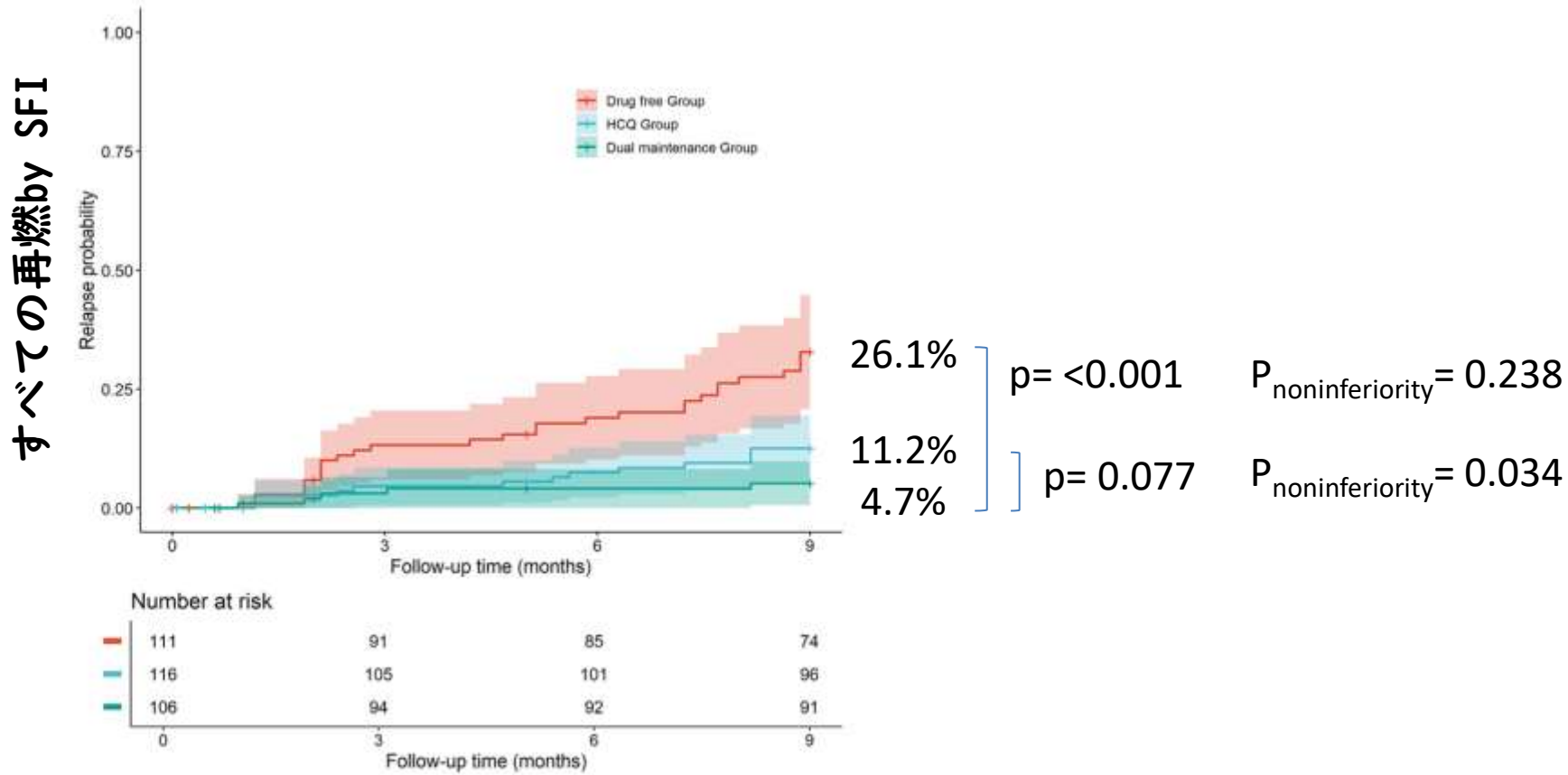


Table 2の一部

Primary and secondary endpoints in two parallel non-inferiority analyses at 33 weeks

	Drug-free group vs dual maintenance group (N= 111:106)		HCQ group vs dual maintenance group (N= 116:106)	
		P value		P value
Cumulative relapse (%)	29 (26.1): 5 (4.7)	0.238 for non-inferiority	13 (11.2): 5 (4.7)	0.034 for non-inferiority
Median relapse time points (months)	4.7±3.0: 3.0±2.8	0.335	3.4±2.7: 3.0±2.8	0.997
Relapse by SFI (%)	29 (26.1): 5 (4.7)	<0.001	13 (11.2): 5 (4.7)	0.077
Mild/moderate relapse (%)	26 (23.4): 4 (3.8)	<0.001	10 (7.8): 4 (3.8)	0.207
Severe relapse (%)	3 (2.7): 1 (0.9)	0.622	3 (2.6): 1 (0.9)	0.623

Secondary Endpoints

各群におけるSLE再燃率と、その差の検定

Table 2

Primary and secondary endpoints in two parallel non-inferiority analyses at 33 weeks

		Drug-free group vs dual maintenance group (N = 111:106)		P value	HCQ group vs dual maintenance group (N = 116:106)		P value
Severe relapseは Drug freeでも稀	Cumulative relapse (%)		29 (26.1): 5 (4.7)	0.238 for non-inferiority	13 (11.2): 5 (4.7)	0.034 for n	
	Median relapse time points (months)		4.7±3.0: 3.0±2.8	0.335	3.4±2.7: 3.0±2.8	0.997	
	Relapse by SFI (%)		29 (26.1): 5 (4.7)	<0.001	13 (11.2): 5 (4.7)	0.077	
	Mild/moderate relapse (%)		26 (23.4): 4 (3.8)	<0.001	10 (7.8): 4 (3.8)	0.207	
	Severe relapse (%)		3 (2.7): 1 (0.9)	0.622	3 (2.6):1 (0.9)	0.623	
BILAGによる 再燃も同じ傾向	Relapse by BILAG index (%)		29 (26.1): 5 (4.7)	<0.001	13 (11.2): 5 (4.7)	0.077	
	Mild relapse (%)	New BILAG C	21 (18.9): 4 (3.8)	<0.001	7 (6.0): 4 (3.8)	0.438	
	Moderate relapse (%)	New BILAG B	2 (1.8): 0 (0.0)	0.498	3 (2.6): 0 (0.0)	0.248	
	Severe relapse (%)	New BILAG A	6 (5.4): 1 (0.9)	0.120	3 (2.6): 1 (0.9)	0.623	
	Moderate/severe (%)		8 (7.2): 1 (0.9)	0.036	6 (5.2): 1 (0.9)	0.122	
軽度のPGA変化 がdrug-freeで差	Patients experiencing an increase in the SDI (%)		0 (0.0): 0 (0.0)	—	2 (1.7): 0 (0.0)	0.499	
	Mean change in PGA						
	PGA≥1 and <2.5 (%)		24 (21.6): 4 (3.8)	<0.001	10 (8.6): 4 (3.8)	0.138	
	PGA≥2.5 (%)		2 (1.8): 1 (0.9)	1.000	2 (1.7): 1 (0.9)	1.000	
HCQ群では白血球減少でのみ 対照群と差。 Drug-free群では腎症と皮疹で 対照群と差。 (HCQが腎、皮疹を抑制？)	Relapse organs						
	Nephritis (%)		7 (6.3): 0 (0)	0.014	2 (1.7): 0 (0)	0.499	
	Central nervous system (%)		0 (0): 0 (0)	—	1 (0.9): 0 (0)	1.000	
	Leucopenia (%)		3 (2.7): 0 (0)	0.247	6 (5.2): 0 (0)	0.030	
	Thrombocytopaenia (%)		1 (0.9): 1 (0.9)	1.000	1 (0.9): 1 (0.9)	1.000	
	Skin/mucosa (%)		10 (9.0): 2 (1.9)	0.022	2 (1.7): 2 (1.9)	1.000	
	Arthritis (%)		5 (4.5): 1 (0.9)	0.213	1 (0.9): 1 (0.9)	1.000	
	Myositis (%)		0 (0): 0 (0)	—	1 (0.9): 0 (0)	1.000	
	Digestive system (%)		1 (0.9): 0 (0)	1.000	0 (0): 0 (0)	—	

サブグループ解析（ベースラインの特徴で再燃リスクを予想できるか？）

(A)
Drug-free
vs
対照群

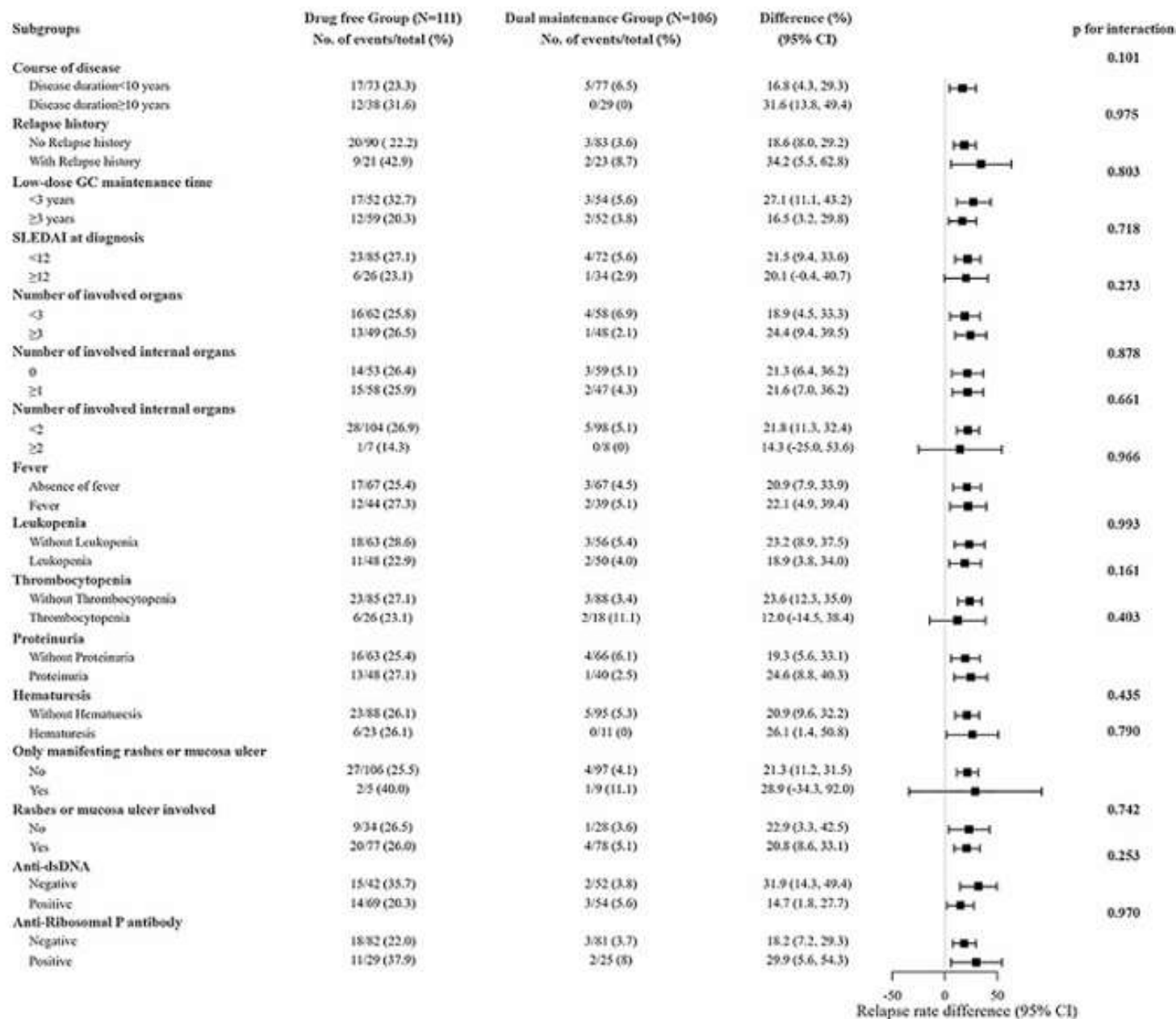
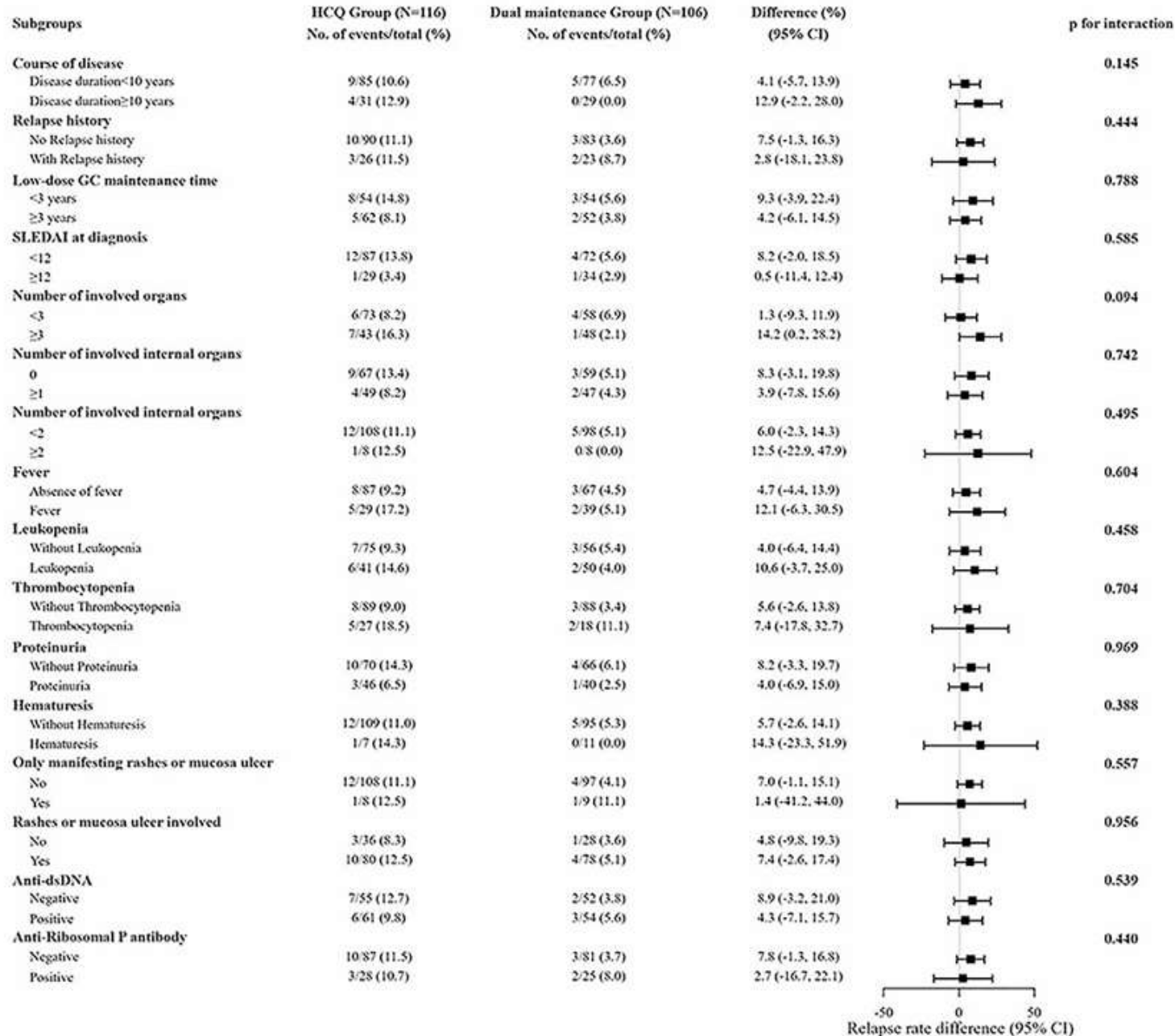


Figure 3. Forest plot of relapse in subgroups analysis with factors at baseline. (A) Forest plot of comparison of relapse with subgroup factors at baseline between drug-free group and dual maintenance Group. (B) Forest plot of comparison of relapse with subgroup factors at baseline between HCQ group and dual maintenance group. Breslow-Day test was used for subgroup analysis and p values were presented to indicate the interaction between subgroup factors and treatment groups. GC, glucocorticoid; HCQ, hydroxychloroquine; SLENA-SLEDAI, the Safety of Estrogens in Lupus Erythematosus National Assessment-Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Disease Activity Index.

Drug-freeにして再燃しやすさを
ベースラインの特徴で予想することは
できなかった

サブグループ解析（ベースラインの特徴で再燃リスクを予想できるか？）

(B)
HCQ群
VS
対照群



HCQ群の再燃しやすさを
ベースラインの特徴で予想
することもできなかった

多変量解析（ベースラインの特徴で再燃リスクを予想できるか？）

Supplementary Table: Logistic regression of factors associated with the primary endpoint

	Odds Ratio	95% Confidence Limits		P
Drug-free Group vs Dual Maintenance Group	6.71	2.33	19.31	<0.001
HCQ Group vs Dual Maintenance Group	2.55	0.82	7.88	0.967
Sex: female vs male	3.91	0.42	36.76	0.234
Onset age	0.95	0.90	1.00	0.046
Age at enrolment	1.05	0.99	1.11	0.085
Duration (years)	1.022	0.953	1.097	0.534
SLEDAI at enrolment	1.13	0.75	1.72	0.553
SLEDAI at diagnosis	0.96	0.85	1.09	0.509
Fever	2.25	1.00	5.02	0.049
Renal involvement	0.96	0.39	2.38	0.935
Central nervous system	0.45	0.05	4.26	0.489
Skin/mucosa	1.21	0.53	2.79	0.650
Arthritis	0.89	0.39	2.02	0.783
Leukopenia	0.67	0.31	1.49	0.329
Haemolytic anaemia	1.23	0.22	6.95	0.817
Thrombocytopenia	1.33	0.54	3.27	0.537
Low-dose GC maintenance time (months)	0.992	0.979	1.004	0.185
Coombs test	0.17	0.02	1.75	0.135
Anti-ribosomal P positivity	2.26	1.00	5.09	0.050
Prednisone (or equivalent) at enrolment (>5mg/d vs ≤5mg/d)	2.86	1.12	7.30	0.029

若いほど再燃しやすい

熱があると再燃しやすい

発症時の
障害臓器、DNA抗体、
低補体は再燃リスクに
ならなかった（本文）

組み入れ時のPSLが多い
方が再燃しやすい

有害事象

スタディ期間中に重篤な有害事象は全体で1例のみ（HCQ群の心筋梗塞）
ドロップアウトした患者にも有害事象関連はなかった

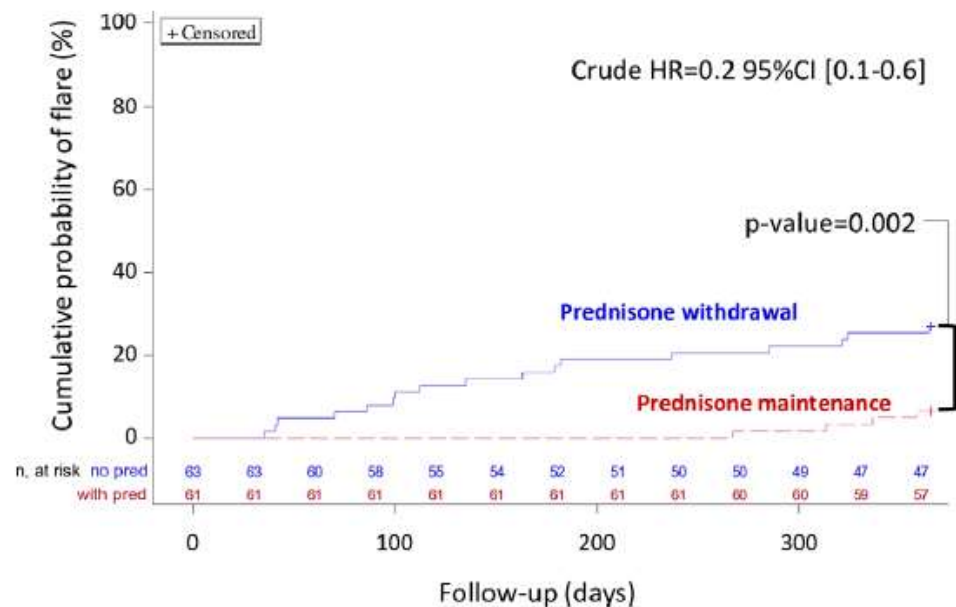
Discussion

<過去の類似報告>

GC中止不可

Withdrawal of low-dose prednisone in SLE patients with a clinically quiescent disease for more than 1 year: a randomised clinical trial

Mathian A et al., ARD 2020; 79: 339



PSL 5mgで1年以上安定したSLE患者をRCTでPSL突然中止群 (hydrocortisone 20mg/d 1カ月後) と維持群に分け
1年間の再燃率を比較。サブ解析でもRisk予測因子なし (HCQ含め)

➡ 本研究とよく似た試験。上記試験の4人に1人はIS使用されていた
しかし、本研究のHCQ群の方がrelapse rateが低い

GC中止可能

Gradual Glucocorticosteroid Withdrawal Is Safe in Clinically Quiescent Systemic Lupus Erythematosus

Tselios K et al., ACR Open Rheumatol 2021; 3: 550

Table 2. Flare rates at 12 and 24 months and damage accrual at 24 months

	Maintenance Group (n = 102)	Withdrawal Group (n = 102)	P Value
Flares at 12 months			
Flare (first definition) ^a	30 (29.4)	18 (17.6)	0.023
Flare (second definition) ^b	14 (13.7)	11 (10.8)	0.467
Flare (third definition) ^c	12 (11.8)	7 (6.9)	0.197
Flares at 24 months			
Flare (first definition) ^a	51 (50)	34 (33.3)	0.01
Flare (second definition) ^b	28 (27.5)	15 (14.7)	0.024
Flare (third definition) ^c	27 (26.5)	13 (12.7)	0.013
Damage accrual at 24 months			
Related to glucocorticosteroids	12 (11.8)	3 (2.9)	0.02
Not related to glucocorticosteroids	7 (6.9)	4 (3.9)	0.317
Increase in SDI	18 (17.6)	7 (6.9)	0.022

Abbreviation: SDI, Systemic Lupus International Collaborating Clinics Damage Index; SLEDAI-2K, Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Disease Activity Index-2000; SMD, standardized mean difference.

Data are given as n (%).

^a Any increase in clinical SLEDAI-2K (excluding serology).

^b Any increase in clinical SLEDAI-2K plus treatment escalation (for glucocorticosteroids, antimalarials or immunosuppressives).

^c Any increase ≥ 4 in clinical SLEDAI-2K.

PSL 5mgで安定したSLE患者を後ろ向きに維持群と2年以内の中止群に分け、Propensity scoreをmatchさせて再燃率の差をみた。

GC中止群の方が再燃率が低かった。

サブ解析でもリスク予測因子なし (HCQ at baseline含め)

<過去の類似報告(続き)>

Risk factors of flare in patients with systemic lupus erythematosus after glucocorticoids withdrawal. A systematic review and meta-analysis

Lanlan Ji et al., Lupus Sci Med 2022; 9: e000603

SACQ
GC中止不可

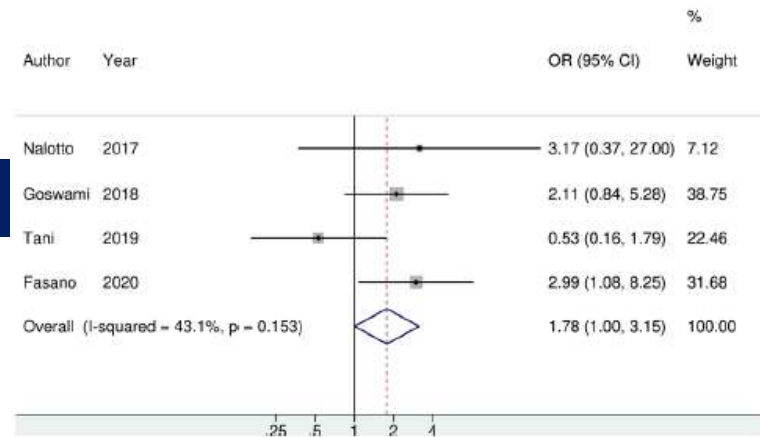
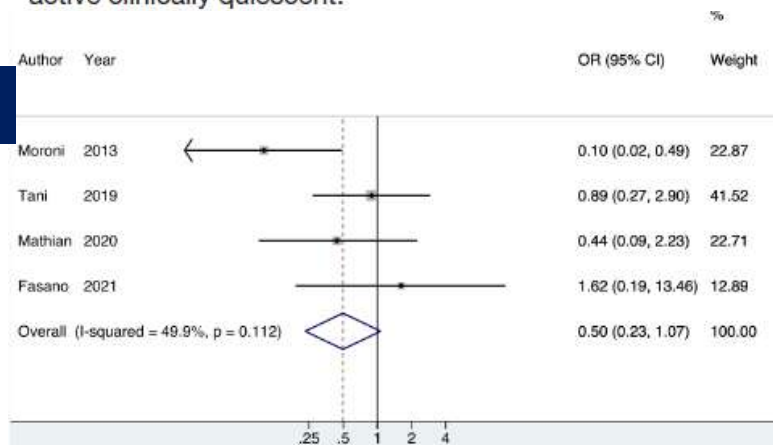


Figure 4 Forest plots of the OR for the risk of flare in patients who stopped glucocorticoids regarding serologically active clinically quiescent.

HCQ
GC中止可能



GC中止論文のsystematic review.
SACQ, ageがflare risk。HCQ(-)はflare傾向

引用されていない重要論文

GC減量可能

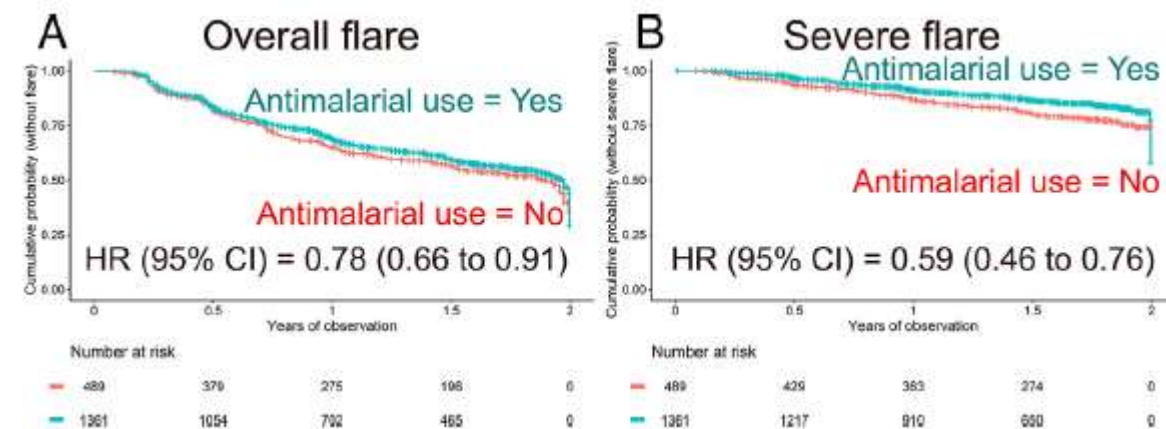
Risk of flare and damage accrual after tapering glucocorticoids in modified serologically active clinically quiescent patients with systemic lupus erythematosus: a multinational observational cohort study

Katsumata Y et al., ARD 2024; 83: 998

Table 2 The risk of subsequent flare or damage accrual per 1 mg decrease of prednisolone in mSACQ patients with SLE assessed using Cox proportional hazard models

Initial prednisolone-equivalent GC dosage (mg/day)	Overall flare HR (95% CI)	Severe flare HR (95% CI)	Damage accrual HR (95% CI)
0s and ≤7.5	1.02 (0.99 to 1.05) P value=0.27 742 events	0.98 (0.96 to 1.004) P value=0.11 271 events	0.97 (0.96 to 0.99) P value=0.007 180 events
0s and ≤5	1.02 (0.98 to 1.06) P value=0.41 555 events	0.98 (0.96 to 1.01) P value=0.28 197 events	0.98 (0.96 to 1.01) P value=0.25 133 events
5< and ≤7.5	1.01 (0.96 to 1.06) P value=0.84 187 events	0.98 (0.92 to 1.03) P value=0.41 74 events	0.96 (0.93 to 0.99) P value=0.007 47 events

Cox proportional hazard models were used to assess the risk of subsequent flare or damage accrual per 1 mg decrease of prednisolone, adjusting for other covariates listed in table 3. Factors/covariates except 'initial prednisolone-equivalent GC dosage' were those at subsequent visits.
GC, glucocorticoid; mSACQ, modified serologically active clinically quiescent; SLE, systemic lupus erythematosus.



Asia-Pacific Lupus Collaborationの前向き収集データ解析
PSL 1mgずつ減量のflare riskでみるとFlare risk上昇しない
HCQはflare riskを下げる

Discussion続き

- どのような患者がGC freeを達成できるかのrisk因子はより大きなスタディが必要。
- 本研究でもリスク因子検索を試みたが、皮膚粘膜症状のみの患者がHCQでGC freeで再燃抑制できるとわかったのみ。

<Limitation>

1. Short follow up period
2. Sample size
3. Not a multiethnic study
4. 主解析で行ったImputationの方法 (BOCF)。十分バイアスリスクを回避できない。