

**OZ-PO-047: INHIBITION OF INTERLEUKIN-8 SYNTHESIS BY INTRAARTICULAR OXYGEN/OZONE THERAPY IN PATIENTS WITH RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS.**

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5 patients with definite rheumatoid arthritis and knee effusions under constant doses of NSARD therapy were treated with up to 6 intraarticular (i.a.) injections every 3 to 7 days. An oxygen/ozone matched randomized control group who received a single i.a. injection of 40 mg triamcinolone hexacetonide (TC) was monitored according to the same protocol. The intraarticular granulocyte counts and IL-8 levels decreased in oxygen/ozone treated patients on day 10-13 and stayed low in those patients who could be re-evaluated after 13 weeks. Compared to the IL-8 levels, the other tested cytokine levels showed only minor changes on day 10-13. There was no need for a re-injection in the TC group during 13 weeks study phase. We conclude that intraarticular oxygen/ozone therapy results in a decrease of SF-granulocyte counts. This effect may be due to the impairment of IL-8 mediated chemotaxis by decreased IL-8 synthesis in synovial fluid mononuclear cells. Clinically, repeated intraarticular oxygen/ozone therapy results in a worse 13 week outcome than i.a. steroid t