

Current medical therapy of inflammatory bowel disease

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Abstract

The current established drugs used to treat inflammatory bowel disease include glucocorticoids including newer agent budesonide, sulfasalazine and 5-ASA compounds such as Asacol, Pentasa,

Dipentum and Balsalazide and immunomodulatory agents such as azathioprine, and 6-mercaptopurine. Additional drugs which have been found to be useful, particularly in refractory cases of Crohn's disease including fistulizing type of Crohn's disease, include cyclosporine A, methotrexate, humanized antibody against TNF- α (cA₂), FK506, IL-10, IL-11 and Probiotics. Various agents, whether used alone or in combination, have to be tailored for each patient and none is ideal. Exciting new developments directed against proinflammatory pathways, cytokines, free oxygen radicals and cell surface related immune targets are areas of intense recent investigations and many novel therapeutic agents are expected to be available in the near future for medical treatment of inflammatory bowel disease.

Key words: Inflammatory bowel disease; Medical therapy; Glucocorticoids; Budesonide; Sulfasalazine; Crohn's disease

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