

# RA patients who are in remission according to the new ACR/EULAR criteria have a functional capacity equal to the general population

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EULAR 2011 THU0351

## Conclusion

Patients with longstanding rheumatoid arthritis (RA) who were in remission according to one of the new ACR/EULAR criteria had a high functional capacity comparable to age and sex matched subjects from the general population. Of note, the agreement between both criteria is only moderate and they are therefore not exchangeable.

## Objectives

To compare the functional capacity of RA patients fulfilling the new EULAR / ACR remission criteria with age- and sex matched subjects from the general population

## Subjects

- 4,459 RA patients enrolled in the German biologics register RABBIT at start of therapy with biologics or non-biologic DMARDs
- subjects from a population based cross-sectional survey of 9,263 (healthy) persons <sup>1</sup>

## Methods

Identification of patients who were in remission 12 months after start of treatment according to

- boolean (1,1,1,1) remission criterion:  $\leq 1$ : swollen joint (SJC),  $\leq 1$  tender joint (TJC),  $\leq 1$  mg/dl CRP, patient global assessment  $\leq 1$  (0-10 scale)
- SDAI remission criterion (SDAI  $\leq 3.3$ )
- DAS28 remission criterion (DAS28 < 2.6)

## Results

	RA patients		Subjects from the population
	DMARD	Anti-TNF	
n	1,540	2,919	9,076
Female (%)	79.4	78.6	53.8
Age, years	57.1	54.7	44.7
Disease duration, years	8.7	11.9	
FFbH (0 – 100% full function)	71.2	64.1	90.7
DAS28	3.7	3.9	
In remission (1,1,1,1) crit. (%)	5.5	4.5	
SDAI $\leq 3.3$ (%)	8.6	7.3	

Tab. 1: Characteristics of RA patients (means) 12 months after start of treatment compared to subjects from the population

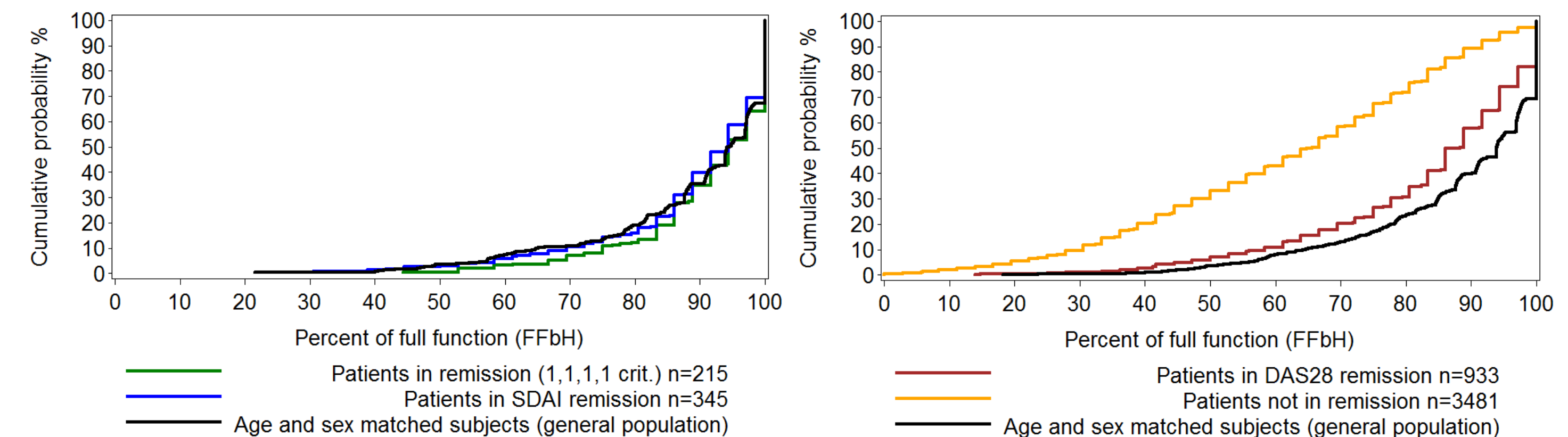
The stringent new remission criteria were fulfilled in 4.8% (SDAI 7.7%) of the patients one year after start of treatment. Patient global assessment was the most limiting factor.

	Pts. with comorbid conditions		
	No n=1376	Yes n=3083	> 2 n=979
CRP: $\leq 1$ mg/dL	77.5	71.6	67.6
SJC: $\leq 1$	50.0	48.2	43.8
TJC: $\leq 1$	45.9	38.5	32.7
Patient global: $\leq 1$	11.6	5.9	3.8
(1,1,1,1) criterion fulfilled	7.8	3.5	2.0

Tab. 2: Percent of RA patients fulfilling single criteria

The agreement between the boolean (1,1,1,1) remission criterion and the SDAI criterion was only moderate ( $\kappa = 0.67$  [95%CI: 0.63 – 0.73]). The agreement was poor with the DAS28 criterion ( $\kappa = 0.26$  [0.23 – 0.30]).

## Functional capacity of RA patients compared to age and sex matched subjects from the population



Patients in remission according to the new ACR/EULAR criteria had a functional capacity fully comparable to subjects from the normal population (see figure) whereas patients fulfilling only the DAS28 but not the new criteria (Tab. 3) were significantly more limited in their activities of daily living.

	FFbH $\geq 90$	FFbH $\leq 75$
Subjects from the population	58%	18%
RA patients in remission new criteria	58%	12%
RA patients in DAS28 remission	38%	25%
RA patients with DAS28 < 2.6 but not fulfilling new criteria	29%	30%
RA patients with DAS28 > 2.6	11%	61%

Tab. 3: Age and sex adjusted<sup>#</sup> proportions of subjects with  $\geq 90\%$  of full function ( $\sim$ HAQ < 0.25) or  $\leq 75\%$  of full function ( $\sim$ HAQ > 1)  
<sup>#</sup> Mean age: 55 years, 75% females.

1) Schmidt CO, Raspe, H, Pflingsten, M, Kohlmann T et al. Back Pain in the German Adult Population Prevalence, Severity, and Sociodemographic Correlates in a Multiregional Survey. Spine 2007;32:2005-11

### Acknowledgement

The authors wish to thank those rheumatologists who enrolled at least 25 patients:

J. Kaufmann, Ludwigsfelde; C. Richter, Stuttgart Bad-Cannstatt; T. Klopsch, Neubrandenburg; A. Krause, Berlin; U. von Hinüber und W. Demary, Hildesheim; K. Babinsky und A. Liebhaber, Halle/Saale; J. Kekow, Vogelsang-Gommern; H. Tony, Würzburg; H. Bergerhausen, Duisburg; A. Kapelle, Hoyerswerda; G. Burmester, Berlin; A. Gräßler, Pirna; K. Rockwitz, Goßlar; A. Bussmann, Geilenkirchen; B. Krummel-Lorenz, Frankfurt/M.; S. Wassenberg, Ratingen; R. Dockhorn, Weener; E. Edelmann, Bad Aibling; E. Wilden, Köln; C. Eisterhues, Braunschweig; H. Kellner, München; S. Zinke, Berlin; M. Aringer, Dresden; W. Ochs, Bayreuth; L. Meier, Hofheim; J. Kaufmann, Naumburg; B. Andermann, Berlin; M. Bohl-Bühler, Potsdam; C. Herzberg und S. Remstedt, Berlin; H. Tremel, Hamburg; C. Stille, Hannover; E. Ständer, Schwerin; T. Grebe, Kreuztal; M. Grünke, München; T. Dexel und S. Späthling-Mestekemper, München; K. Alliger, Zwiesel; K. Weiß, Lichtenstein; T. Karger, Köln; P. Herzer, München; F. Schuch, R. de la Camp und J. Wendler, Erlangen; J. Walter, Rendsburg; K. Krüger, München; J. Rech, Erlangen; S. Balzer, Bautzen; D. Pick, Grafenschaft-Holzweiler; M. Schneider, Düsseldorf; S. Lebender, Hamburg; A. Krause, Hamburg; W. Biewer, Saarbrücken; K. Karberg, Berlin; M. Zänker, Bernau; G. Fliedner und G. Gauler, Osnabrück; A. Jahn, Berlin; A. Thiele, Berlin; K. Leumann, Riesa; R. Alten, Berlin; V. Petersen, Hamburg; K. Fischer, Greifswald; A. Teipel, Leverkusen; H. Körber, Elmshorn; H. Menne, Dortmund; D. Krause, Gladbeck; R. Haux, Berlin; J. Häntsch, Darmstadt; G. Kittel, Baden-Baden; K. Gräfenstein, Treuenbrietzen; S. Berger, Naunhauf; F. Moosig, Bad Bramstedt; W. Liman, Hagen; I. Kötter, Tübingen; A. Reck, Mittelherwigsdorf; M. Sekura, Wesel; M. Schwarz-Eywill, Oldenburg; J. Rump, Freiburg; J. Gutfleisch, Biberach; E. Riechers, Hannover; Möbius, Schwerin; U. Rosendahl, Siegen; U. Müller-Ladner, Bad Nauheim.

Supported by a joint, unconditional grant from Abbott, Amgen/Swedish Orphan Biovitrum, BMS, Essex/MSD, Pfizer, Roche, UCB, Germany.