

Experience of multiple sclerosis and its disease-modifying therapy in Taiwan



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In Taiwan, Multiple sclerosis (MS) is belong to "rare disease" since there are few patients diagnosed as such a disease before though the first paper in Taiwan for Multiple sclerosis was published 1976 at NTUH. Anyway, as the announcement and education to neurologist and general physicians, more and more doctors understand the disease and will arrange and manage for these patients.

There is yearly record for rare disease in Taiwan, till 2013; there are 1106 registered patients of MS. The prevalence of MS in Taiwan was 2.96/100,000 in 2005; now it is near 4.9/100,000 in 2013.

As the first paper 1976 noticed, more patients are belong to opticospinal MS (OS-MS), but during these time goes, the ratio between OS-MS and conventional MS(C-MS) had been changed. Especially when anti-AQP4 antibody was claimed to be as a part of diagnostic criteria of neuromyelitis optica (NMO). In Taiwan, at least at NTUH, sampling for AQP4 for MS and NMO patients had been a regular procedure when a new patient needed to be diagnosed. And in seronegative NMO, we tried to analyze anti-MOG antibody for those patients.

Till 2010, there are 145 patients regularly followed up at our hospital and numbers of patients are increasing. One important reason is the prescription of disease-modify therapy (DMT). In Taiwan, most DMT proved by FDA are available but it needs to be applied by registered neurologists. After the import of oral DMT (Fingolimod, more patient diagnosed MS will take drug to prevent further relapse. Also there are trials for DMT are on progressing.

Except medical issues, there are basic studies in Taiwan. We will make a brief introduction of Multiple sclerosis, Neuromyelitis optica in Taiwan, including clinical and basic studies at present.
