

ABSTRACT

Acitretin: The Italian Experience

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Acitretin is a synthetic vitamin A analogue of the aromatic retinoid generation. The main acid derivative and metabolite of etretinate, the drug has been developed for the treatment of psoriasis and other diseases. Studies on the efficacy of Acitretin, compared with etretinate, carried out on over 700 psoriatic patients, showed a substantial improvement in around 70% of both groups of patients. 50 mg/day was the optimal dose. Combination therapy with PUVA or UVB was found to be of clinical

value. Side effects were similar to those observed with etretinate. Acitretin is more rapidly eliminated from the body than is etretinate and it appears not to accumulate in human adipose tissue. Therefore its teratogenic potential can be limited to a shorter period following treatment withdrawal. However, etretinate traces have been detected in the plasma of some patients treated with acitretin.