There was no significant difference in the rates of death among study patients with rheumatoid arthritis who were exposed to one of several tumor necrosis factor inhibitors used to manage RA. Researchers linked data from the Swedish Biologics Register, a comprehensive database of patients for whom first-ever biologic therapy for rheumatologic diseases was being started, and information from national Swedish registers (including all-cause mortality, demographics, RA characteristics, and other data). There were more than 19,000 person-years of follow-up in the 5-year study period, during which time 3.3% of the patients died.

Although no statistically significant difference in mortality rates across 3 biologic therapies (adalimumab, etanercept, and infliximab) was found, further studies are needed to determine whether that would hold across various subsets of patients with RA, it was noted. This population-based study of patients with RA, the first to compare mortality rates among patients treated with individual TNF inhibitors, was published in Arthritis & Rheumatism, an American College of Rheumatology publication.

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