

CORRESPONDENCE

Of cats and mites: withdrawal of Xolair after prolonged use

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The article by Nopp et al. (1) provides a long awaited piece of information to all physicians prescribing Xolair. It clearly demonstrates that Xolair is not necessarily an open-ended treatment as it seems to be possible to stop it without patients reversing to their previous clinical status.

Still, to better understand the implications of this study, some points need to be taken into consideration. The authors' final analysis is centered in the 15 cat allergic patients, whereas most patients treated with Xolair in other areas of the world are allergic to house dust mites. There is no information regarding the continuous presence of cats or cat allergen in the houses of these patients. Even though exposure to cat allergen can happen in public places, removal of cats by the Xolair-treated patients from their houses could have significantly contributed to their improvement. It certainly is technically easier to remove cats than mite allergen

from implicated houses. Most patients will remain exposed to house dust mite allergen in spite of their best efforts.

Until similar results are published regarding patients allergic to house dust mites, it will be difficult to extend these results to the general Xolair-treated population.

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Reference

1. Nopp A, Johansson SGO, Adédoyin J, Ankerst J, Palmqvist M, Öman H. After 6 years with Xolair; a 3-year withdrawal follow-up. *Allergy* 2010;**65**:56–60.