
Answers to CME examination

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JAAD Game Changers: Standardized laboratory monitoring with use of isotretinoin in acne



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Capsule Summary

- The optimal timing of laboratory tests for patients undergoing isotretinoin treatment for acne is uncertain.
- In this series, although abnormalities in serum lipid levels in patients receiving isotretinoin were not infrequent, they were mild to moderate and were generally noted around the second month of treatment.
- For healthy patients who are taking isotretinoin, we recommend that a lipid panel and liver function tests be performed at baseline and at month 2, when peak dosing is achieved. Further testing should be considered if a significantly abnormal value is noted.

How did this article change the practice of dermatology?

This very important article suggests that we are overmonitoring for our patients who are taking isotretinoin. Liver function tests and lipid panels may be necessary only after month 2, and complete blood counts are not necessarily going to change patient outcomes. This is important to avoid unnecessary blood draws and expenditure of health care dollars.¹

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1. Hansen TJ, Lucking SM, Miller JJ, Kirby JS, Thiboutot DM, Zaenglein AL. Standardized laboratory monitoring with use of isotretinoin in acne. *J Am Acad Dermatol*. 2016;75(2):323-328.