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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: COMBINATION OF BLYS INHIBITION AND/OR APRIL INHIBITION AND IMMUNNOSUPPRESSANTS FOR TREATMENT OF AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE

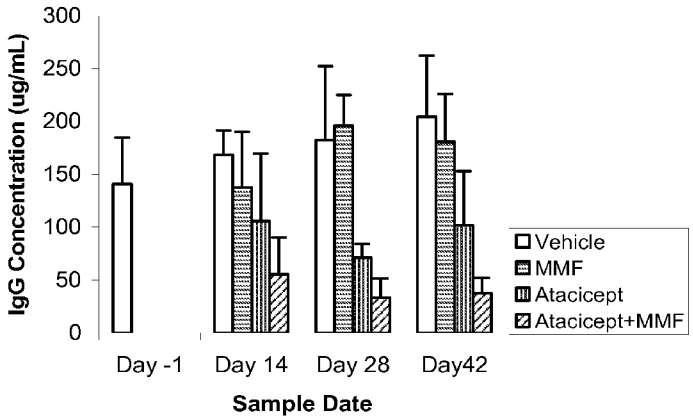


Figure 1

(57) Abstract: The invention relates to novel combination therapies involving BLyS or BLyS/APRIL inhibition and immunosuppressants for the treatment of autoimmune diseases. One preferred method is where the BLyS and/or APRIL antagonist is a Fc-fusion protein which can be a TACI-Fc-fusion protein comprising the extracellular domain of TACI or a functional fragment thereof, a BAFF-R-Fc-fusion protein comprising the extracellular domain of BAFF-R or a functional fragment thereof, or a BCMA-Fc-fusion protein comprising the extracellular domain of BCMA or a functional fragment thereof. In the methods of the present invention some of the immunosuppressive drugs contemplated include cyclophosphamide (CYC), azathioprine (AZA), cyclosporine A (CSA), or mycophenolate mofetil (MMF), although any drug that suppresses the immune system may be suitable. The methods of the present invention reduce the levels of various immunoglobulins in patients in need of such reduction, such as those suffering from autoimmune diseases.

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