



**16 March 2024**

**Statement regarding off label medications for the management of FOP, from the International Clinical Council (ICC) on FOP**

The International Clinical Council (ICC) on FOP clinicians are aware of several recent publications describing the off-label use of potent medications for managing inflammation in FOP. These potential treatments include the use of anakinra (1), canakinumab (1), tofacitinib (2), and imatinib (3; 4). These reports appear to show some benefits, particularly with managing FOP flares and flare pain.

Right now, we have no or limited data on:

- 1) whether the benefit is only for reducing flares (which is what has been reported for all of these medications);
- 2) whether there is any benefit for function or reducing heterotopic ossification;
- 3) the long-term safety of these medications in FOP; and
- 4) what happens when a patient stops the medication.

We also have very little or no systematic data for the safety of these medications in children with FOP, even though many of these medications have been used in children with non-FOP conditions.

These preliminary studies support the need for larger, well controlled, human clinical trials to determine the safety and efficacy of these medications in FOP.

Until those studies are completed, the ICC recommends considering these medications only for situations where all three minimal key criteria are met:

1. FOP flares are considered severe and intractable, or where there is unusually severe or rapid progression of the disease, and
2. Once standard of care therapies ([ICCFOP.org](https://iccfop.org)) have been exhausted, and
3. The clinical team feels that the medications could be used safely (i.e. no other contraindications, no underlying problems with infection, no immunocompromised situations, etc.) and according to the age at which these drugs may have been authorized.

Due to the risk profiles of all these medications, the ICC does NOT recommend the use of off-label medications as a preventive.

If you wish to consider these medications for you or your child, please discuss the pros and cons in detail with your doctors and FOP clinicians. Medication interactions and individual risks vary and can be severe. These risks must be discussed at the individual patient level. Social media claims of safety are not the same as an open medical discussion of potential risks and benefits. The ICC believes in individual choice. Whether someone takes a potential therapy, or feels that a therapy works, is an individual judgment that must be made with all available risks and benefits clearly presented.

ICC also recommends review of active clinical trials before making decisions regarding off label use of these medications. Taking any of these off-label medications may disqualify you from participation in formal clinical trials. In addition, clinical trials are monitored closely for safety and efficacy, and information from those clinical trials can help the FOP community advance different therapeutic options and support future drug approvals. Information from off label use of a medication outside of a clinical study is not sufficient for drug approval.

If you choose to use these medications, or any other medications that are not considered standard-of-care for patients with FOP, it should be done with close monitoring in collaboration with your FOP clinical team. If you are in a clinical trial, you must discuss any potential changes to your therapy before starting a new medication. Off-label medications are often not allowed during your participation in a clinical trial.

The ICC strongly recommends following the most up-to-date version of the consensus Treatment Guidelines, available on the ICCFOP.org webpage.

The International Clinical Council on FOP (The ICC) is an autonomous and independent group of 21 internationally recognized physicians who are clinical experts in FOP from 15 nations (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, South Africa, South Korea, United Kingdom, Mexico, India, and United States) and six continents (Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America). The ICC was established to coordinate and consolidate a global voice for the best practices for clinical care and clinical research for people who live with FOP. The ICC publishes the FOP Clinical Treatment Guidelines, which is used internationally to guide the management of patients with FOP (ICCFOP.org) (5). The ICC also has published key recommendations for clinical trials testing potential therapies for FOP (6).

### **Citations:**

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2. Nikishina, I.P., Arsenyeva, S.V., Matkava, V.G., Arefieva, A.N., Kaleda, M.I., Smirnov, A.V., Blank, L.M., and Kostik, M.M. (2023). Successful experience of tofacitinib treatment in patients with Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva. *Pediatr Rheumatol Online J* 21(1), 92.
3. Kaplan, F.S., Andolina, J.R., Adamson, P.C., Teachey, D.T., Finklestein, J.Z., Ebb, D.H., Whitehead, B., Jacobs, B., Siegel, D.M., Keen, R., Hsiao, E., and Pignolo, R.J. (2018).

Early clinical observations on the use of imatinib mesylate in FOP: A report of seven cases. *Bone* 109, 276-280.

4. Kaplan, F.S., Teachey, D.T., Andolina, J.R., Siegel, D.M., Mancilla, E.E., Hsiao, E.C., Al Mukaddam, M., Rocke, D.M., and Pignolo, R.J. (2021). Off-on-off-on use of imatinib in three children with fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva. *Bone* 150, 116016.
5. Kaplan, F.S., Al Mukaddam, M., Baujat, G., Hsiao, E.C., and FOP, T.I.C.C.o. (2022). The medical management of fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva: current treatment considerations. *Proc Intl Clin Council FOP* 2, 1-127.
6. Hsiao, E.C., Di Rocco, M., Cali, A., Zasloff, M., Al Mukaddam, M., *et al.* (2019). Special considerations for clinical trials in fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva (FOP). *Br J Clin Pharmacol* 85(6), 1199-1207.