

Untreated relapsing remitting Multiple Sclerosis (RR-MS) patients. A single centre experience.

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Objective: to provide a picture, taken from the real world of a MS centre, of the reasons why a patient with relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis RR-MS is not treated with specific drugs for the disease.

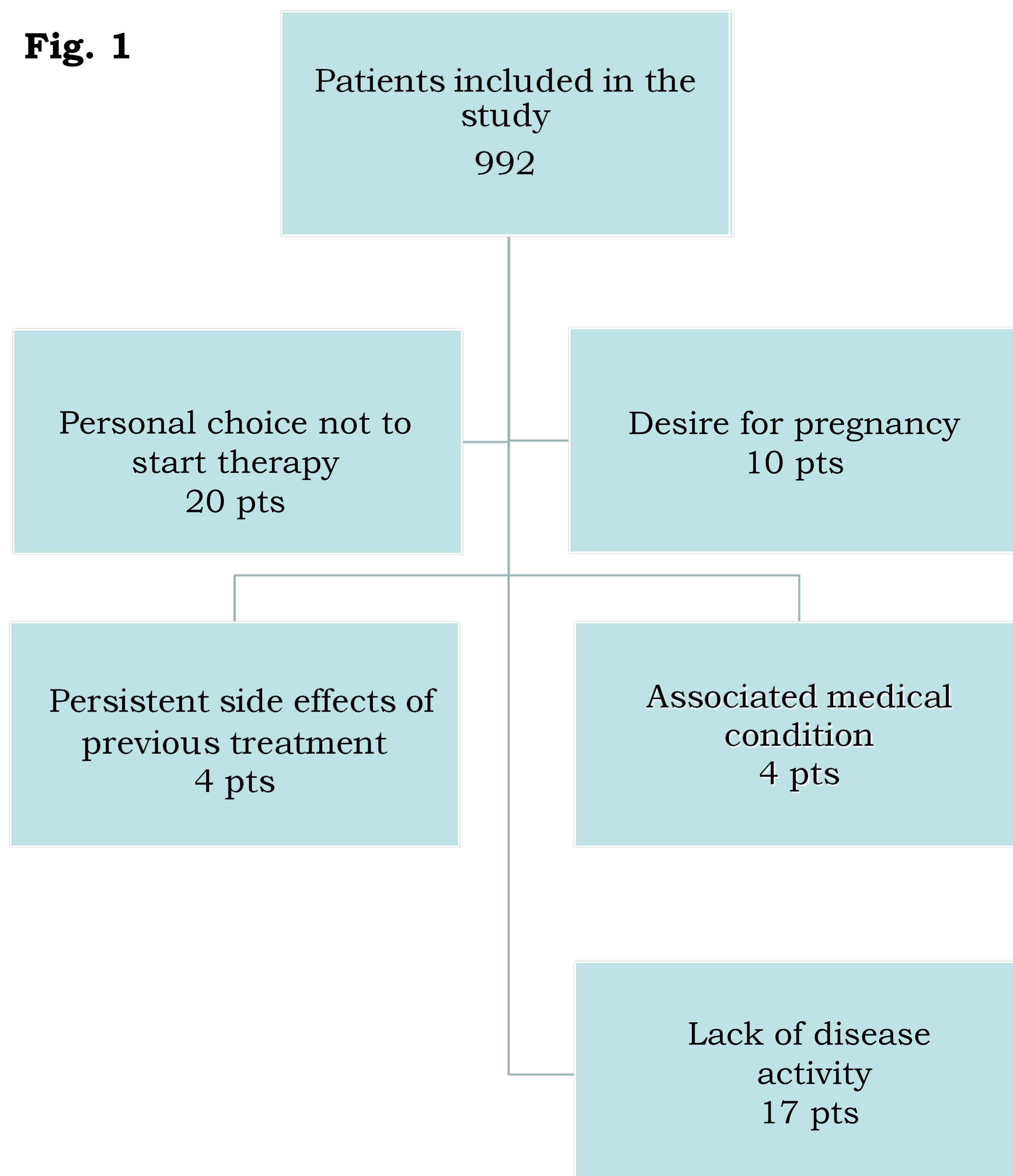
Methods: we retrospectively selected, from our iMed 6.1 database, all patients who received at least one neurological assessment from January 2014 to January 2015 and who were not being treated with one of the approved drugs for the disease. We evaluated all of the causes of non-treatment in these selected patients.

Results: out of 992 patients who had at least one neurological assessment in the last year 55 (46F/9M) patients were not treated with a specific drug for the disease. The reasons for this choice were: not wanting to start a therapy for personal choice in 20 (36%) patients; desire for pregnancy in 10 (22%) female patients; persistent side effects from previous treatments in 4 (7%) patients; other associated medical conditions (for example malignancies) in 4 (7%) patients.

The lack of disease activity has been the reason for which the physician, in accordance with the patient, had not initiated any specific therapy in 17 (30%) of patients. The median follow-up of these patients was 8.2 years (range 3-20). During this period, no patient had a relapse or worsening of disability progression, as assessed by EDSS performed every six months. Eight of seventeen patients (47%) had had at least one "active" brain or spine MRI during the follow-up period (see table 1), but this did not induce the treating physician to start a specific therapy.

Discussion: In our experience only a small percentage of patients with RR-MS are untreated. Out of 992 only 17 (1.7%) patients were not treated with a specific drugs for the disease due to a not-active disease (Fig 1). A lack of clinical worsening was crucial in the choice of not to treat these patients.

Fig. 1



Patients	Follow-up (years)	Relapse	Worsening EDSS	"active" brain or spine MRI
1	3	0	No	0
2	7	0	No	0
3	16	0	No	1
4	4	0	No	1
5	4	0	No	1
6	15	0	No	0
7	3	0	No	1
8	9	0	No	1
9	3	0	No	0
10	10	0	No	1
11	3	0	No	0
12	14	0	No	1
13	3	0	No	0
14	4	0	No	1
15	20	0	No	0
16	16	0	No	0
17	6	0	No	0