NEWCASTLE - OTTAWA QUALITY ASSESSMENT SCALE (adapted for cross-sectional studies) Selection:

This scale has been adapted from the Newcastle-Ottawa Quality Assessment Scale for cohort studies to provide a quality assessment of cross-sectional studies.

Selection: (Maximum 5 stars)

1. Representativeness of the sample:

a. Truly representative of the average in the target population. * (all subjects or random sampling)

b. Somewhat representative of the average in the target group. * (non-random sampling)

c. Selected group of users/convenience sample.

d. No description of the derivation of the included subjects.

2. Sample size:

a. Justified and satisfactory (≥100 patients included). *

b. Not justified (<100 patients included).

3. Non-respondents:

a. The response rate is satisfactory (≥90% of patients have anti-Ro levels available). *

b. The response rate is unsatisfactory (<90% of patients have anti-Ro levels available).

4. Ascertainment of the exposure (risk factor):

a. Validated measurement tool used and anti-Ro52 has been distinctly measured. **

b. Validated measurement tool used but no distinction is made between anti-SSA/Ro and anti-Ro52. *

c. measurement methods not described.

Comparability: (Maximum 2 stars)

1. Comparability of subjects in different outcome groups based on design or analysis.

a. One star was given if gender was comparable between the groups. *

b. One additional star was given if any other variables such as age, other antibodies, disease type, disease duration, etc. were comparable. *

c. Information was not provided or groups were not comparable.

Outcome: (Maximum 3 stars)

1a. Assessment of the outcome (ILD)

a. HRCT or lung biopsy. **

b. Restrictive pattern pulmonary function tests and CXR. *

c. Information not provided.

1b. Assessment of the outcome (RPILD)

a. RPILD defined as either of the following criteria in one month: 1) Progressive worsening of dyspnea; 2) Decrease in FVC by more than 10% or decrease in DLCO by more than 15%; 3) Increase in the severity of interstitial pneumonia on HRCT; 4) Arterial blood gases showing respiratory failure or decrease in partial pressure of oxygen more significant than 10 mmHg. **

b. RPILD defined in time frames higher than one month. *

c. Information not provided.

2. Statistical test:

a. Statistical test used to analyze the data clearly described, appropriate, and measures of association presented including confidence intervals and probability level (P value). *

b. Statistical test not appropriate, not described, or incomplete.

Cross-sectional Studies: Very Good Studies: 9-10 points Good Studies: 7-8 points Satisfactory Studies: 5-6 points Unsatisfactory Studies: 0 to 4 points