



Figure 1. The mean dose of prednisolone in mg per kg body weight received in the active group ($n = 28$) (■) and the placebo group ($n = 29$) (▲) in the test period (day 1 to 84).

Table 4. The use of prednisolone (mg kg^{-1}) expressed as the area under the curve (AUC) for different time periods in the active ($n = 28$) and placebo group ($n = 29$). Data are given as mean with 95% CI

	Active group		Placebo group		<i>P</i> -values
	Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI	
AUC ₁₋₈₄	17.9	(13.2-20.1)	21.5	(15.2-27.8)	0.324
AUC ₄₁₋₈₄	6.7	(4.9-8.5)	10.2	(6.3-14.1)	0.094
AUC ₂₀₋₄₄	5.4	(3.9-6.8)	8.4	(5.1-11.7)	0.081
AUC ₁₇₋₄₄	4.0	(2.8-5.1)	6.6	(4.1-9.7)	0.059
AUC ₆₋₄₄	2.7	(1.9-3.5)	4.9	(3.1-6.8)	0.037
AUC ₁₁₋₄₄	1.7	(1.1-2.2)	3.2	(2.0-4.4)	0.024
AUC ₇₁₋₈₄	0.7	(0.5-1.1)	1.5	(0.9-2.1)	0.018

Table 5. The use of prednisolone (mg kg^{-1}) expressed as the area under the curve (AUC) for different time periods in quartiles in the active group ($n = 28$). The quartiles (1st quartile-4th quartile) are based on the amount of gamma-linolenic acid (GLA) received from the supplement in mg per kg body weight. Data are given as mean with total range (the amount of GLA and the body weight) or mean with 95% CI (AUC)

	1st quartile	2nd quartile	3rd quartile	4th quartile
GLA (mg/kg)	7.6 (3.8-9.0)	9.8 (9.1-10.3)	11.3 (10.3-13.1)	16.9 (14.0-19.1)
Body weight (kg)	44.9 (34.9-82.0)	29.1 (22.2-33.0)	25.8 (8.0-30.5)	12.6 (11.0-15.0)
AUC ₁₋₈₄	20.7	11.7	25.7	13.5
95%CI	(9.4-32.0)	(7.1-16.4)	(17.0-34.4)	(8.6-18.4)
AUC ₆₋₄₄	4.0	1.6	3.6	1.6
95%CI	(1.4-6.6)	(0.5-2.6)	(1.6-5.7)	(0.4-2.9)
AUC ₁₇₋₄₄	2.4	0.9	2.3	1.0
95%CI	(0.8-3.9)	(0.2-1.7)	(0.9-3.8)	(0.2-1.8)
AUC ₇₁₋₈₄	1.0	0.5	1.1	0.4
95%CI	(0.3-1.6)	(0.02-1.0)	(0.4-1.9)	(0.03-0.7)

difference between the groups increased towards the end of the trial (Table 4).

In the active group, the amount of GLA received from the supplement was highest in the 4th quartile and lowest in the 1st quartile. If a dose-response effect was present, the use of prednisolone (AUC) should be lowest in the quartile receiving the highest dose of GLA (the 4th quartile). The AUC should thereafter increase in the third and second quartiles, and be highest in the 1st quartile. This was not the case and, on the contrary, the AUC fluctuated from quartile to quartile (Table 5).

Investigator-evaluated clinical scores

On days 0 and 42, the total clinical scores were higher in the active group, whereas on day 84 the total clinical score was lowest in the active group. The differences were not statistically significant. A statistically significant reduction in total clinical scores from day 0 to 42 was apparent in both groups ($P < 0.0001$). From day 42 to 84, a further reduction was seen in both groups; however, this reduction was less pronounced and not statistically significant (Table 6). The median percentage reduction in the total clinical score in the active and placebo group was 83.1 (95% CI: 66.7-93.6) and 76.5