

Treatment of chronic hepatitis C in haemophilic patients

Single centre experience

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Chronic hepatitis C (CHC) and its complications are major problems in haemophilia population previously treated with non-virally inactivated products. Use of interferon and ribavirin combination is standard treatment approach at this time.

Method

Patients with severe or moderate haemophilia A or B (n = 30) have been treated in our centre by using on demand therapy regimen (Immunate, Immunine, Fanhdi). The majority of older patients have been suffering from HCV

due to using plasma non-inactivated products before 1990.

We evaluate the results of treatment in eight patients with CHC, who were treated from 1999–2007. Only patients with positive PCR-HCV, verified progression of liver function tests (ALT, AST) and with given consent were treated. Primary infection was asymptomatic and has been unrecognised for many years. HCV genotyping was also performed – type Ia in three, type Ib in five cases were confirmed. No coinfection with HBV or HIV was observed.

Results

Four patients were treated with combination INF alpha and Ribavirin, in four naive patients and in two relapsed PEGylated form of INF plus Ribavirin was used. From the first subgroup

- two patients achieved sustained virological response (SVR),
- two patients relapsed to HCV-RNA positivity.

From PEG-INF subgroup

- three patients achieved SVR,
- two other achieved early virological response (EVR) but early relapsed,
- in one patient only decrease of viraemia was observed.

In one patient with EVR and relapse treatment was prematurely stopped due to severe bleeding complication to CNS.

During substitution therapy development of inhibitor was observed. Its consequence with immunomodulation effect of CHC treatment is possible.

Conclusion

Treatment of chronic HCV infection using INF alpha and Ribavirin combination has the same efficiency as in general population. Tolerance of the treatment was satisfactory, no serious adverse event was observed. PEG-INF usage was more comfortable for patients.

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