Current and Emerging Management Approaches for the Patient with Hepatorenal Syndrome (HRS)
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Disclosures

• Research Support: Intercept
• Consultant: Dova, Shionogi, Intercept
Acute Kidney Injury (AKI) in Cirrhosis

• Traditional criteria (IAC criteria)\(^1\)
  – 50% increase in SCr over baseline
  – Cut-off value of SCr: 1.5 mg/dL

• New definition of AKI\(^2\)
  – ↑ in SCr ≥ 0.3 mg/dL within 48 hours or ↑ SCr ≥ 50% from baseline that is known or presumed to have occurred within the prior 7 days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage AKI(^1)</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>Increase in SCr ≥ 0.3 mg/dL or an increase in SCr ≥1.5-fold to 2-fold from baseline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Increase in SCr &gt; 2- to 3-fold from baseline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Increase of SCr &gt; 3-fold from baseline or SCr ≥ 4.0 mg/dL with an acute increase ≥ 0.3 mg/dL or initiation of renal replacement therapy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

HRS-1 → AKI-HRS  
HRS-2 → CKD-HRS

AKI in Cirrhosis: Differential Diagnosis

• Prerenal
  – Hypovolemia: diuretics, GI bleeding, diarrhea
  – Hepatorenal syndrome

• Acute tubular necrosis: shock, nephrotoxic drugs, other

• Nephrotoxicity: NSAIDs, iodinated contrast, other

• Intrinsic renal disease (glomerulonephritis, interstitial nephritis)

• Obstructive

• Miscellaneous, unknown
AKI in Cirrhosis: When Is It HRS?

- Diagnosis of cirrhosis and ascites
- Diagnosis of AKI according to International Club of Ascites-AKI criteria
- No response after 2 consecutive days of diuretic withdrawal and plasma volume expansion with albumin (1 g per kg of body weight, 100g max)
- Absence of shock
- No current or recent use of nephrotoxic drugs
- No macroscopic signs of structural kidney injury defined as:
  - Absence of proteinuria (> 500 mg/day)
  - Absence of microhaematuria (> 50 RBCs /hpf)
  - Normal findings on renal ultrasonography

Pathophysiology AKI-HRS

AKI and Cirrhosis

• AKI diagnosed with AKIN criteria associated with increased mortality in patients with cirrhosis

• Progression through stages strongly correlates with increased mortality

• However, serum creatinine cutoff of 1.5 mg/dL is still prognostic
  – Identifies patients at increased risk of mortality

• New AKI-HRS criteria enable earlier treatment (by 4 days) at lower creatinine (1 mg/dL lower)
  – Baseline serum creatinine is a predictor of response to therapy

Initial Management

• Early identification
• Assess and treat bacterial infection
  – Blood, urine, ascitic fluid culture
• Avoid large-volume paracentesis
• Stop β-blockers
• Stop nephrotoxic medications: NSAIDs, diuretics
• Volume expansion

Albumin: Role in the Treatment of Cirrhosis and Its Complications

- Oncotic Pressure
  - High concentration
  - Intravascular distribution

- Capillary permeability

- Hemostatic effect
  - Cys-34
  - High Concentration

- Endothelial stabilization
  - Endotoxin binding inactivation
  - Intracellular glutathione
  - TNF-induced NF-κB activation
  - Intracellular distribution

- Immunomodulation
  - Endotoxin binding inactivation
  - Intracellular glutathione
  - TNF-induced NF-κB activation

- Solubilization, transport, metabolism
  - - ve charge:
    - Electrostatic bind
    - Specific binding sites
    - Unspecific binding sites
    - Cys-34

- Antioxidant
  - Cys-34
  - N terminal: Metal binding
  - Bilirubin binding

Pharmacologic Therapy for HRS

IV Albumin
- 0.5 – 1gm/kg (max 100gm/d) for resuscitation; then
- 25 to 50 g/day

Plus

Vasoconstrictors
- Midodrine (+/- octreotide)
- Norepinephrine
- Terlipressin

**Midodrine Plus Octreotide: Dosing**

**Midodrine:** initially 7.5 mg oral 3 times daily
- Titrate to maximum of 12.5 mg 3 times daily

**Octreotide:** 100 µg SC 3 times daily
- Maximum dose 200 µg SC 3 times daily
- Titrate to achieve increase of MAP by 15 mmHg

**Note this is off-label treatment for HRS but recommended by AASLD Practice Guidelines**

Improvement in Renal Function: TERLI vs MID/OCT

Fig. 4. Cumulative 3-month survival in patients who were randomized to terlipressin plus albumin (TERLI group) or to midodrine and octreotide plus albumin (MID/OCT group) according to the response: solid line represents responders; dotted line represents nonresponders. Abbreviation: N.S., nonsignificant.
Terlipressin + Albumin vs Albumin Alone for HRS-1 (CONFIRM Study)

- Randomization, placebo-controlled study in 300 patients
- 2:1 to terlipressin (1 mg IV every 6 hours) or placebo, plus albumin in both groups
- Treatment for 14 days unless one of the following occurred:
  - Verified HRS reversal (VHRSR) (decrease in SCr to ≤ 1.5 mg/dL)
  - Renal replacement therapy (RRT)
  - Liver transplantation (LT) or
  - SCr at or above baseline (BL) at Day 4
- Primary Endpoint
  - VHRSR defined as 2 consecutive SCr values ≤ 1.5 mg/dL, at least 2 hours apart, with patient alive without RRT for ≥ 10 days after the second SCr ≤ 1.5 mg/dL

Primary Endpoint: Verified HRS Reversal

Secondary Endpoint: Durability of HRS Reversal

From a CMH Test stratified by qualifying serum creatinine (< 3.4 vs ≥ 3.4 mg/dL) and prior LVP within 14 days of randomization (at least one single event of ≥ 4 vs < 4 L).

Percentage of subjects with HRS reversal without RRT to day 30.
Incidence of AEs (> 10% Terlipressin Patients)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Term</th>
<th>Terlipressin (N = 200)</th>
<th>Placebo (N = 99)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abdominal pain</td>
<td>19.5 (39)</td>
<td>6.1 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nausea</td>
<td>16.0 (32)</td>
<td>10.1 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
<td>13.0 (26)</td>
<td>7.1 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyspnea</td>
<td>12.5 (25)</td>
<td>5.1 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory failure</td>
<td>10.5 (21)</td>
<td>5.1 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatic encephalopathy</td>
<td>10.0 (20)</td>
<td>13.1 (13)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respiratory Failure higher in both cohorts in CONFIRM than REVERSE trial; REVERSE T 5.4% vs P 2.1%; none of the respiratory failure were reported as related to study drug.

AEs, adverse events; N, number of subjects in the treatment group; n, number of subjects in the category of subjects in the treatment group.

a Up to 7 days posttreatment. b Subjects experiencing multiple episodes of a given adverse event are counted once within each preferred term.

Prevention of HRS in Patients with Cirrhosis

- Avoid NSAIDs
- Avoid ACE inhibitors
- Decrease/withdraw diuretics when decompensated
- Consider lactulose and volume of stool output
- Threshold at which to discontinue beta-blockers?
- Maintain mean arterial pressure (MAP)
  - No good data on prevention, but an increase with successful treatment is common
  - Data suggest that those with lowest MAP may respond to medical treatment best
Take Home Points

• AKI in chronic liver disease impacts mortality
• HRS is defined as AKI that does not respond to volume resuscitation upon correction of sepsis and in the absence of other renotoxic insult
• Current classification expedites the recognition of HRS-AKI and allows for potential intervention
• Vasoactive agents (terlipressin and norepinephrine) can reverse HRS-AKI in a percentage of patients
• Terlipressin is superior to other agents in reversing HRS with expected survival benefits
  – Phase 3 CONFIRM US study results now available
Thank you!