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Review Article

Management of HBV/HIV Co-Infection

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Abstract

The prevalence and transmission routes of HBV co-infection in the HIV+ population vary substantially by geographic region. In the United States and Europe, the majority of HIV-positive gay men have evidence of past HBV infection, and 5–10% show persistence of HBs antigen, with or without replicative hepatitis B as defined by the presence of HBV DNA. Overall, rates of HBV/HIV co-infection are slightly lower among intravenous drug users compared to gay men and much lower among people infected through heterosexual contact. In endemic regions of Africa and Asia, the majority of HBV infections are transmitted vertically at birth or before the age of 5 through close contact within households, medical procedures, and traditional scarification. The prevalence among youth in most Asian countries has substantially decreased since the introduction of vaccination on a nationwide scale. In Europe, vaccination of children and members of risk groups is promoted and reimbursed by health care systems in most countries. The natural history of hepatitis B is altered by simultaneous infection with HIV. Immune control of HBV is negatively affected, leading to a reduction in HBs-antigen seroconversion. If HBV persists, the HBV DNA levels are generally higher in HIV-positive patients not on antiretroviral therapy. In addition, with the progression of cellular immune deficiency, reactivation of HBV replication despite previous HBs-antigen seroconversion may occur. However, after immune recovery due to antiretroviral therapy, He-antigen and HBsantigen seroconversion occurs in a higher proportion of patients compared to HBV mono infected patients treated for chronic hepatitis B. In untreated HIV infection, faster progression to liver cirrhosis is reported for HBV/HIV-co-infected patients Moreover, hepatocellular carcinoma may develop at an earlier age and is more aggressive in this population. Keywords: liver/hepatitis; antiretroviral therapy; antiviral therapy; pathogenesis; reverse transcriptase inhibitors

Introduction

Being HBV-coinfected results in increased mortality for HIV-positive individuals, even after the introduction of effective antiretroviral therapy (ART), as demonstrated by an analysis of the Euro SIDA Study, which shows a 3.6-fold higher risk of liver-related deaths among HBsAg-positive patients compared to HBsAg negative individuals (Konopnicki 2005, Nikolopoulos 2009) [16] (Figure 1). In the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study (MACS), an 8-fold increased risk of liver-related mortality was seen among HBV/HIV co-infected compared to HIV-mono infected individuals, particularly among subjects with low nadir CD4+ cell counts. Even at present, despite the widespread use of tenofovir, HBV/HIV coinfection is

still associated with increased morbidity (Crowell 2014) [18], and liver-related deaths in HBV/HIV-infected patients still do occur (Rosenthal 2014) [19]. The beneficial impact of treatment of HBV in HBV/HIV coinfection was first demonstrated by data from a large cohort showing a reduction in mortality with lamivudine treatment compared to untreated patients (Puoti 2004, Brau 2007) This result is even more remarkable because lamivudine is the least effective HBV polymerase inhibitor due to the rapid development of drug resistance. In general, because of its limited long-term efficacy, lamivudine monotherapy cannot be considered an appropriate therapy for either mono HBV infection or HBV/HIV coinfection.

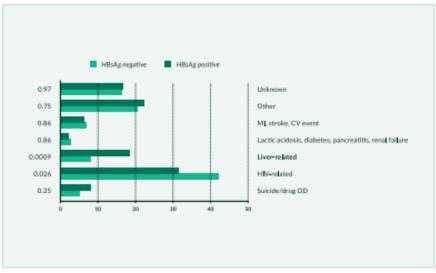


Figure 1: Association of HBV/HIV coinfection and mortality (Konopnicki 2005). More than one cause of death allowed per patient; p-values from chi-squared tests.

In addition, two large cohort studies (EuroSIDA and MACS) plus data from HBV mono-infection studies showing a reduction in morbidity and mortality established the need to treat chronic hepatitis B in HBV/HIV-co-infected patients.

Treatment of chronic hepatitis B in HBV/HIV-co-infected patients on antiretroviral therapy

In the well-known, beginning hepatitis B therapy depends on the diploma of liver fibrosis and the HBV DNA level. however, as the artwork is now encouraged for all HIV sufferers unbiased of CD4-be counted to reduce HIV-associated morbidity and mortality and to prevent HIV transmission, all HBV/HIV-co-infected patients are considered eligible for art with the aid of cutting-edge hints (e.g., every 2016). The previous complicated recommendations for a way to deal with continual hepatitis B in patients without artwork are obsolete. As antiretroviral capsules which can be additionally lively towards HBV can commonly be used, interferon-based total treatment of HBV is now not often indicated. statistics within the literature for HIV-co-infected patients on interferon therapy for HBV infection are restrained and no longer very encouraging. In addition, intensified treatment research combining pegylated interferon with adefovir or intensifying TDF therapy with pegylated interferon for 12 months confirmed no boom in HBV seroconversion quotes (Ingiliz 2008. In widespread, tenofovir is the usual care for HBV in HIV-co-infected patients, because of its strong HBV polymerase hobby and antiretroviral efficacy. Tenofovir has been a protracted-acting and effective therapy in the giant majority of dealt with HBV/HIV-co-infected patients (van Bömmel 2004, Mathews 2009, Martin-Carbonero 2011, Thibaut, its antiviral efficacy isn't impaired in HBV/HIV-coinfected as compared to HBV-mono infected sufferers. No conclusive pattern of resistance mutations has been recognized in research or cohorts (Snow-Lampart 2011). [28] These data are nonetheless legitimate at the cease of 2016. In idea, resistance might also arise in sufferers on lengthy-time period therapy, as with some other antivirals. For patients with HBV DNA <2000 IU/mL and no relevant liver fibrosis, no specific artwork routine is recommended. however, because of the favorable resistance profile, a routine along with tenofovir is the first preference. while selecting an HBV polymerase inhibitor, whole suppression of HBV DNA is critical to keep away from the development of HBV drug resistance, whilst HBV DNA is above 2000 IU/mL in HBV treatment naïve sufferers, a combination of tenofovir plus lamivudine/emtricitabine to treat each infection is commonly recommended. Even for sufferers who harbor lamivudine-, telbivudine- or adefovir-resistant HBV because of previous treatment plans this approach stands. the advice is to maintain lamivudine/ emtricitabine is primarily based on behind-schedule resistance to adefovir visible when doing so, however, the identical impact has no longer been in aggregate with tenofovir (Berg 2010, Patterson 2011)30. beginning art such as tenofovir ended in higher prices of HBe antigen loss and seroconversion as predicted from HBV-mono infected patients (Schmutz 2006, Piroth 2010, Kosi 2012). This may be due to an additional effect of immune reconstitution in HBV/HIV co-infected patients complicating the immunological control of HBV replication. For patients with advanced liver fibrosis or liver cirrhosis, a maximum active continuous HBV polymerase inhibitor therapy is important to avoid further fibrosis progression and hepatic decompensation and to reduce the risk of developing hepatocellular carcinoma. Tenofovir plus lamivudine/emtricitabine is the treatment of choice. If the results are not fully suppressive, adding entecavir should be considered. A reduction in the incidence of hepatocellular carcinoma has been shown for patients on HBV polymerase inhibitors compared to untreated patients, strengthening the anti-proliferative effects of suppressive antiviral therapy. Liver ultrasound is needed at least every six months, for early detection of hepatocellular carcinoma. In patients with advanced cirrhosis, esophagogastroscopy should be performed as screening for esophageal varies. For patients with hepatic decompensation and full treatment options for HBV and who have stable HIV infection, liver transplantation should be considered as post-transplant life expectancy seems to be the same as for HBV-mono infected patients (Coffin, 2007, Tateo. Patients with hepatocellular carcinoma may also be considered a liver transplant candidate, although according to preliminary observations from small cohorts, the outcome may be worse than for HBV-mono infected patients (Vibert, 2008). In prospective controlled studies, tenofovir was superior to adefovir for the treatment of HBe antigen-positive and HBe antigen-negative patients. The acquisition of adefovir resistance mutations and multiple lamivudine resistance mutations may impair the activity of tenofovir although even in these situations, tenofovir retains sufficient activity against HBV In lamivudine-resistant HBV, the antiviral efficacy of entecavir in HIV-co-infected patients is reduced, as it is in HBV monoinfection (Shermann 2008). Because of this and the property of tenofovir as a fully active antiretroviral, tenofovir-DF is the preferred choice in treatment-naïve HBV/HIV co-infected patients who will use ART. The use of entecavir, telbivudine, or adefovir as an add-on to tenofovir or other drugs in the case of not fully suppressive antiviral HBV therapy has not yet been studied in HBV/HIV coinfection. This decision should be made on a caseby-case basis. Based on the history of ART, combination HBV therapy of tenofovir plus lamivudine/emtricitabine was expected to be superior to tenofovir monotherapy, in particular in patients with highly replicative HBV infection. However, this hypothesis has not as yet been supported by studies. Data are showing better viral suppression for entecavir and tenofovir-DF compared to entecavir monotherapy in highly replicative patients with HBVmono infected, but no such study is available for comparison with tenofovir monotherapy. In the case of HIV resistance to tenofovir, it is usually important to continue using tenofovir for HBV activity when switching to other ART. Discontinuation of the HBV polymerase inhibitor without maintaining the antiviral pressure on HBV can lead to necro-inflammatory flares that can result in acute liver decompensation, particularly in patients with liver cirrhosis. In 2015, tenofovir alafenamide (TAF) was approved as antiretroviral therapy in Europe and the US. TAF is a new formulation of tenofovir with lower plasma exposure of the active drug tenofovir compared to tenofovir diproxovil fumarate (TDF). TAF has not shown superior antiviral activity against HIV or HBV compared to TDF but may offer advantages concerning long-term toxicities involving bone and kidney over TDF. TAF can substitute TDF as HBV therapy in HBV/HIV-co-infected patients. In November 2016, TAF was approved for HBV treatment in the US, followed by the approval in Europe in January 2017.

The potentially nephrotoxic effect of TDF is a concern. Although nephrotoxicity is rarely observed in HIV-negative patients treated with TDF monotherapy renal impairment has been more frequently reported in HIV-positive patients using TDF as a component in ART and may be associated in particular with the combined use of TDF and ritonavir-boosted HIV protease inhibitors (Mauss 2005, Fux 2007, Goicoechea 2008, In addition, the recently approved cytochrome P450 3A inhibitor cobicistat can also increase creatinine levels. Regular monitoring of renal function in HBV/HIV-co-infected patients, including estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) and assessment of proteinuria, is necessary. In the case of a reduced eGFR, TDF should be substituted by TAF or should be dosed at a reduced frequency according to the label. In the case of significant proteinuria, TDF should also be replaced by TAF. Alternatively, in specific situations in the case of tenofovir-associated nephrotoxicity, tenofovir can also be replaced by entecavir.

Conclusion

The number of available HBV polymerase inhibitors for chronic hepatitis B has increased substantially over the last few years. In general, the choice is confined to two mostly non-cross-resistant classes, the nucleotide, and nucleoside compounds HBV/HIV co-infected patients, ART is indicated to treat both infections simultaneously. The HBV treatment of choice is tenofovir. Due to the rapid development of resistance when HBV is not fully suppressed HBV monotherapy with either lamivudine or emtricitabine should not generally be considered. A combination of tenofovir plus lamivudine or emtricitabine as a primary combination therapy has theoretical advantages over tenofovir alone, but studies supporting this concept have not been published to date. However, as tenofovir is combined with emtricitabine or lamivudine in most antiretroviral regimens today. This seems to be a more theoretical argument and not reflected by reality. In general, the treatment of HBV as a viral disease follows the same rules as HIV therapy, aiming at full suppression of the replication of the virus to avoid the development of resistance. Successful viral suppression of hepatitis B results in the inhibition of necro-inflammatory activity, reversion of fibrosis, and most importantly a decrease in the incidence of hepatic decompensation and hepatocellular carcinoma.

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Authors' Contribution

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict-of-interest.

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