

P-519 - RISK FACTORS FOR DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS IN PATIENTS WITH HEPATITIS C TREATED WITH PEGYLATED INTERFERON ALPHA THERAPY

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Introduction: Current standard treatment of chronic hepatitis C (CHC) consists of pegylated recombinant interferon alpha (PEG-IFN- α) combined with oral ribavirin (RBV). Interferon treatment is associated with depressive symptomatology. Risk factors such as duration of CHC, former drug addiction, lifetime psychiatric disorder, sex, duration of therapy, dose of PEG-IFN- α have been shown to be associated with depression in patients with CHC.

Objective: To prospectively evaluate association of depression and specific risk factors in patients with CHC treated with PEG-IFN- α .

Methods: The Hamilton Depression Rating Scale was used to assess depressive symptoms in 74 subjects with CHC before PEG-IFN- α (mean dose 152.6 ± 25.6 mcg), and in the follow-up visits (4, 12 and 24 week). The sociodemographic and hepatitis C related history of the patients were examined on the basis of medical chart review.

Results: After controlling for baseline HAMD scores, only female sex was confirmed as a risk factor for depression ($p=0.008$) at fourth week after baseline. No association was found with any of three groups of risk factors:

- 1) subject related risk factors (age ($p=0.955$), sex ($p=0.008$), lifetime psychiatric disorder ($p=0.656$)),
- 2) illness related risk factors (duration of CHC ($p=0.267$), i.v drug application as way of transmission ($p=0.292$)) and
- 3) therapy-related risk factors (recommended duration of PEG-IFN- α ($p=0.993$) and dose of PEG-IFN- α ($p=0.841$)).

Conclusions: Common risk factors were not found to correlate with depressive symptomatology in CHC on PEG-IFN- α . Hepatologists are encouraged to use self-assessment depression scale instead of relying on any of the routinely assessed risk-factors.