Post-Liver Transplant Hep C Responds to Triple Therapy

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Those who have experienced a recurrence of genotype 1 of hepatitis C virus (HCV) after a liver transplant appear to respond moderately well to Victrelis (boceprevir) or Incivek (telaprevir)-based triple therapy, but they experience a high rate of serious side effects, MedPage Today reports. Investigators presented preliminary findings from their ongoing study of 112 study participants at the International Liver Congress, the 48th annual meeting of the European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL) in Amsterdam.

Fifteen participants in the study had been taking interferon and ribavirin for more than 90 days before the two protease inhibitors, Victrelis and Incivek, were approved in 2011, allowing them to begin triple therapy. The investigators included data from this group in the analysis of the drugs' efficacy, but it was left out of the safety studies. The remaining 97 participants began therapy with a short lead-in of interferon and ribavirin and then continued with triple therapy (most took Incivek) for a total of 48 weeks of therapy.

The researchers presented an analysis at EASL concerning 43 participants who were at least four weeks past finishing therapy. Sixty-five percent of this group achieved a sustained virologic response (SVR) four weeks after completing therapy. An SVR 12 weeks after therapy is considered a cure.

However, 11 percent of the group discontinued treatment because of adverse reactions, 21 percent required a hospital admission, 34 percent required transfusions, and 4 percent experienced a graft rejection; 6 percent of the group died, two-thirds of them from liver-related causes.

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