Merck’s Triple-Drug Hep C Combo Cures Almost All of Retreated Group

The trial tested 16 and 24 weeks of grazoprevir/uprifosbuvir/ruzasvir among those with genotype 1 who had failed a previous treatment.

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In a recent trial, Merck’s triple-drug hepatitis C virus (HCV) regimen cured nearly all those with genotype 1 of the virus who had failed a previous cure attempt, aidsmap reports.

The C-SURGE trial included 94 people with genotype 1, mostly those with genotype 1a (as opposed to genotype 1b). They were randomly assigned to receive once-daily grazoprevir/uprifosbuvir/ruzasvir with ribavirin for 16 weeks or without ribavirin for 24 weeks.

Findings were presented at the 52nd International Liver Congress in Amsterdam.

Eighty percent of the participants were men, and the median age was 60. More than 40 percent had compensated cirrhosis.

Ninety-eight percent of those who received 16 weeks of treatment achieved a sustained virologic response 12 weeks after completing therapy (SVR12, considered a cure), compared with 100 percent of those treated for 24 weeks.

The one person in the 16-week group who was not cured quit the study after taking three doses of treatment.

The treatment was generally safe and well tolerated, with no drug-related serious adverse health events and no discontinuations because of adverse events. The most common side effects were fatigue, headache, diarrhea, rash and itching. Four people (9 percent) who took ribavirin developed anemia.

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