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Interferon-based antiviral treatment of chronic hepatitis c in combination with metformin in patients with HCV-1 genotype and insulin resistance

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Aim: To decide whether adding metformin an agent reducing insulin resistance (IR), improves treatment efficacy of chronic hepatitis C (genotype 1) in naïve patients.

Methods: 133 treatment-naïve patients were tested: 70 patients with IR and 63 patients without it. 28 of 70 patients with IR received metformin. Metformin was added to a standard Peg-IFN α -2b/ribavirin therapy at the very start of treatment or 3-6 months before the start and continued throughout the whole course of treatment. Patients in the second control group with IR did not receive metformin (n=42). Patients in both groups receiving and not receiving metformin did not differ significantly in viral load, the degree of liver fibrosis (measured with FibroScan[®]502) and gender.

Results: Among the patients with HCV-1 without IR, SVR rate was 46% (n=29/63) and in those who had IR (not receiving metformin) the rate of SVR was 42% (n=18/42), p=0.33. Among patients with HCV-1 and with IR, receiving metformin, the SVR rate was 64% (n=18/28), p=0.001. Significant reduction of glucose levels among patients with IR receiving metformin was not revealed.

Conclusion: Adding metformin to a standard Peg-IFN α -2b/ribavirin therapy for treatment-naïve HCV-1 patients with IR leads to an increase of SVR by 1.5 times. Metformin is safe and efficient for patients with chronic hepatitis C and IR as a drug reducing IR.

Biography

Olga Tarasova is an Associate Professor of Hospital, Therapy department of RUDN University, Doctor-hepatologist of the Liver Research Center of the Medical Institute of RUDN University. She repeatedly spoke at international conferences of the American and European, Pacific associations for the study of liver diseases (DDW, AASLD, EASL, APASL) including Singapore, New York and Chicago. She has 15 years of experience in the treatment of patients with chronic and severe liver damage, hepatitis and cirrhosis based on the university's clinic. She has published more than 25 scientific and educational-methodical works.

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