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Inhibiting c-reactive protein in humans – Way into clinical studies

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Specific inhibition of C-reactive protein (CRP) may represent a novel approach for the treatment of inflammatory and autoimmune diseases and, specially, cardiovascular disease. However several expensive attempts to develop specific CRP-inhibitors have not been successful. Recently, cardiac glycosides have been identified to potently inhibit CRP synthesis in the liver. Although the latter observation may be difficult concerning patent law considerations it might finally turn out to be very helpful in coming to a conclusion on the question whether CRP is causally involved in cardiovascular disease or not. Cardiac glycosides, for the treatment of heart failure, have been in clinical use since the late 18th century and much is known about their toxicity and side effects. Clinical studies with these familiar drugs are ethically much easier to justify and reformulation of established substance classes has become one of the leading strategies for drug development today. Here, we outline our ongoing clinical study on inhibition of CRP synthesis by cardiac glycosides.

Biography

Oliver Zimmermann, MD, is consultant at Cardiovascular Center Oberallgäu-Kempten (Germany). Both published more than 20 papers in reputed journals and serve as reviewers in the field of cardiac inflammation and the role of C-reactive protein in cardiovascular disease.

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