

Arizona Anticoagulation Forum Newsletter



For Members

July 2009

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FEATURE ARTICLE

The Role of Anticoagulation in Heart Failure Patients with Normal Sinus Rhythm

Controversy surrounds the use of anticoagulation therapy in patients with heart failure without other compelling indications for its use. The data is unclear and benefits vs. risks should be considered. A recent article in the American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy reviewed the most current evidence, based on a systematic review of the literature.

The three sides of Virchow's triad (hypercoagulability, endothelial dysfunction, and abnormal blood flow) are present in heart failure.

Hypercoagulability markers are altered, endothelial dysfunction is attributed by elevated levels of von Willebrand factor and impaired nitric oxide release promoting platelet adhesion, and abnormal blood flow is caused by ventricular dysfunction. Previous studies have reported varying rates of thrombosis in heart failure, ranging from 1.9-42.4 thromboembolic events per 100 patient years. These studies, however, included atrial fibrillation (A. Fib.) patients and bedridden patients with end-stage heart failure.

The Heart Failure Long-Term Anticoagulation Study (HELAS) and the Warfarin/Aspirin Study in Heart Failure (WASH) study are the only published prospective controlled studies that evaluate anticoagulation in systolic heart failure patients without other compelling indications. Neither study found a benefit from warfarin treatment, but both studies were underpowered. HELAS compared warfarin, aspirin,

and placebo in patients with symptomatic systolic heart failure, finding no difference between groups in nonfatal stroke, MI, or pulmonary or peripheral embolism. No statistical data were provided. WASH compared warfarin, aspirin, and placebo and did not find a significant difference in death, nonfatal MI, and nonfatal stroke. A significant difference was found in all-cause hospitalization rates, with aspirin patients having the greatest risk. The Warfarin and Antiplatelet Therapy in HF (WATCH) compared warfarin to aspirin or clopidogrel in left-ventricular systolic dysfunction patients. No significant difference was found in all-cause mortality, stroke, or nonfatal MI (primary endpoints) between the warfarin and aspirin groups. However, differences were found in reduction in HF hospitalizations with warfarin compared to aspirin but the warfarin group had more major bleeding episodes than the clopidogrel group. Post hoc analysis found no difference in stroke or peripheral or pulmonary

thromboembolism between warfarin and placebo groups in V-HeFT I, but found a higher rate in warfarin versus placebo groups in V-HeFT II. Post hoc analysis of SCD-HeFT comparing outcomes of patients with ICDs receiving amiodarone or placebo did not find a significant association between thromboembolism rate and use of warfarin.

The most recent guidelines (see table below) are unclear and inconsistent reflecting the current clinical data. The risk of bleeding outweighs the benefit, if there is any. The current body of data provides conflicting results both in support of and in refutation of anticoagulation. The limited evidence available does not support the use of anticoagulation in patients with heart failure and normal sinus rhythm.

Organization	Guideline or Recommendation
American College of Cardiology- American Heart Association	"The usefulness of anticoagulation is not well established in patients with heart failure who do not have atrial fibrillation or a previous thromboembolic event."
Heart Failure Society of America	"In the absence of atrial fibrillation, a recent large anterior myocardial infarction, or LV thrombus,

	warfarin anticoagulation may be considered in patients with dilated cardiomyopathy and LVEF \leq 35%. Careful assessment of the potential risks and benefits should be undertaken in individual patients."
American College of Chest Physicians	"In patients with CHF due to a nonischemic etiology, we recommend against routine use of aspirin or oral vitamin K antagonists."

American Journal of Health-System Pharm. 2009; 66:134-41.

Upcoming Events / Opportunities

Local Anticoagulation Certificate Program

We are pleased to announce that registration is now open for our upcoming anticoagulation certificate program! The certificate program is comprised of a 10 hour home study which must be completed prior to the live meeting and an 8 hour live meeting. The live program will be held on August 28th (evening) and August 29th (morning) at Banner Baywood Medical Center in Mesa. **Register early-after July**

29th a \$50 late fee will be added to your registration.

For those of you that have taken the program in the past, please note that the content has been updated with the 2008 ACCP guidelines and new lectures added on quality improvement initiatives in anticoagulation and case study breakouts. The ACPE number has been updated so if you have taken the course before you can take it again and get full ACPE credit!

Revenue generated from the certificate program is used to support our free programs throughout the year-so help support your AZ Anticoagulation Forum!!!!

Finally, please note that all home study materials will be sent via e-mail. We have encountered a significant number of people have e-mail through their employers that **block or restrict e-mail messages**. If your company has these filters in place, please provide a home/alternate e-mail address. We will not mail hard copies of the home study materials.

**Note the online registration will be posted on the home page for the Arizona Pharmacy Alliance*

If you have questions, feel free to contact Chris Tankersley at 602-595-2461 or the Arizona Pharmacy Alliance at 480-838-3385.

Anticoagulation Therapy Management Certificate Program - University of Southern Indiana

This 6 week internet course is offered July 27 and October 12, 2009.

This program is designed for English-speaking nurses, pharmacists, physicians, and other health care practitioners who have, or want to prepare for, responsibility for monitoring and managing outpatient anticoagulation therapy.

The cost of the program is \$500, which includes internet instruction, handouts, and a comprehensive exam. The textbook is not included in the cost of the program. There is an additional \$50 charge for pharmacists requesting contact hours.

For more information call 1-877-874-4584 or e-mail anticoag@usi.edu



Advanced Preceptorship in the Management of Anticoagulation Therapy and Clinical Thrombosis

When: November 6 -7, 2009

Where: Albuquerque, NM

Attendees: physicians, pharmacists, and nurses specializing in anticoagulation management

Description:

Anticoagulation therapy is required treatment in a wide array of medical and surgical conditions. Safe and effective management of patients on anticoagulant therapy is a critical issue. This two-day advanced preceptorship will address: 1. Principles of anticoagulation therapy, 2. System-of-care approach to anticoagulation therapy, and 3. Use of disease management protocols in anticoagulation therapy.

Website:

www.lcfresearch.org

Anticoagulation Certificate Program from University of Florida

This ongoing online internet program is intended for pharmacists wishing to increase knowledge and skills to assist in caring for patients requiring anticoagulation therapy.

The College of Pharmacy will award 3 continuing pharmacy education credits (3 CEU's) upon completion of all modules and a Certificate from the University of Florida College of Pharmacy, indicating that you have completed a rigorous course of study in Anticoagulation Therapy.

Cost for this program is \$995.

Additional information is provided at www.cop.ufl.edu/programs/ce.

Southwest Symposium on Thrombosis & Hemostasis

When: October 10 & 11, 2009

Where: Albuquerque, NM

Website:

CMEWeb@salud.unm.edu

Upcoming CACP Exam Dates

If you were certified on or before December 31, 2004, you are due for recertification on or before December 31, 2009.

Date	Location
8/22/09	Seattle, WA
11/7/09	Boston, MA
12/09 (TBD)	Las Vegas, NV

For more information regarding the exam and possible additional dates/locations visit the website at www.ncbap.org



Under Construction

AZ Anticoagulation Forum's website is currently being built and should be available this fall!

Career Opportunities

North Phoenix Heart Center has a RN position available. For more information, call Leueen Belanger at (602)445-

7741 or email www.lbelanger@nphc.com.

Tri-City Cardiology has a RN position available. Anticoagulation experience and some supervisory experience preferred. For more information, please contact Jean Ybarra at (480)505-5229 or email at www.jybarra@tricitycardiology.com.