Letter by Nikpour et al Regarding Article, “Effect of Warfarin Treatment on Survival of Patients With Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH) in the Registry to Evaluate Early and Long-Term PAH Disease Management (REVEAL)”

To the Editor:

We read with interest the article by Preston et al1 reporting the results of the Registry to Evaluate Early and Long-Term PAH Disease Management (REVEAL) study of warfarin treatment in pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH).1,2 We note the investigators’ conclusions that there was no survival advantage observed with warfarin treatment in patients with idiopathic PAH and that warfarin was associated with poorer survival in systemic sclerosis PAH.

Although in the Discussion the authors refer to 8 previous observational studies evaluating the role of anticoagulation in PAH, we note that a key reference by Ngian et al3 was omitted from the article itself and its accompanying editorial. Because this is 1 of only 4 observational studies (including REVEAL) to evaluate the role of anticoagulation with warfarin in systemic sclerosis PAH (n=104; of whom 30% were anticoagulated) and the only study to show a survival benefit (multivariable hazard ratio for mortality, 0.20; 95% confidence interval, 0.05–0.78, P=0.02), even after adjustment for PAH severity and concomitant advanced PAH therapy, we believe that its inclusion is important in presenting a more balanced discussion of this contentious area.

We advise caution in relation to change in treatment practices based on observational data alone. These studies are not designed to systematically capture detailed data on anticoagulation including duration and timing of anticoagulation, target international normalized ratio, stability of international normalized ratio, adverse bleeding outcomes, and their relationship to the intensity of anticoagulation. In addition, clinical features that may influence whether an individual patient is commenced on anticoagulant therapy are not captured or adjusted for. Based on the published studies to date, we believe there now exists a state of equipoise in relation to the role of anticoagulation in systemic sclerosis PAH.

Disclosures

Dr Nikpour holds an NHMRC Clinical Research Fellowship (APP1071735) and has received investigator-led research support from NHMRC, Scleroderma Australia, Arthritis Australia, Actelion, Bayer, CSL Biotherapies, GSK, Pfizer, and BMS. The other authors report no conflicts.

Mandana Nikpour, MB BS, PhD
David Prior, MB BS, PhD
The University of Melbourne at St. Vincent’s Hospital
Melbourne Australia

David Celermajer, PhD, DSc
The University of Sydney at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
Sydney Australia

References


Letter by Nikpour et al Regarding Article, "Effect of Warfarin Treatment on Survival of Patients With Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH) in the Registry to Evaluate Early and Long-Term PAH Disease Management (REVEAL)"
Mandana Nikpour, David Prior and David Celermajer

_Circulation._ 2016;133:e661
doi: 10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.116.021847
_Circulation_ is published by the American Heart Association, 7272 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75231
Copyright © 2016 American Heart Association, Inc. All rights reserved.
Print ISSN: 0009-7322. Online ISSN: 1524-4539

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/133/20/e661

Permissions: Requests for permissions to reproduce figures, tables, or portions of articles originally published in _Circulation_ can be obtained via RightsLink, a service of the Copyright Clearance Center, not the Editorial Office. Once the online version of the published article for which permission is being requested is located, click Request Permissions in the middle column of the Web page under Services. Further information about this process is available in the Permissions and Rights Question and Answer document.

Reprints: Information about reprints can be found online at:
http://www.lww.com/reprints

Subscriptions: Information about subscribing to _Circulation_ is online at:
http://circ.ahajournals.org/subscriptions/