

HYPERTENSION Berlin 2008

June 14 - 19, 2008, ICC Berlin, Germany



18th Scientific Meeting European Society of Hypertension
22nd Scientific Meeting International Society of Hypertension
In co-operation with the German Hypertension League

Antihypertensives now also being tested on and authorized for the treatment of children and adolescents

Berlin, May 2008 - Hypertension is by no means restricted to adults. Children and adolescents may also suffer from high blood pressure that requires treatment. Until recently doctors have only been able to use antihypertensives off-label for the treatment of their young patients. In order to improve the medicinal treatment of children and adolescents, the new EU Regulation on medicinal products for paediatric use (1901/2006/EC) calls for studies on this population group. At the International Hypertension Congress in Berlin in June experts in the field will be discussing which drugs are also suitable for use on children and adolescents.

„Until recently, almost all hypertension drugs were on the EMEA list of drugs whose use in the treatment of children and adolescents required further testing“, comments Professor Dr. Dr. h.c. Wolfgang Rascher of the Department for Children and Adolescents at Erlangen's University Hospital. However there have always been children who needed treatment for high blood pressure. In small children it is usually caused by congenital blood vessel malformation or kidney disease. In adolescents, like in adults, it is increasingly the result of adiposity and lack of exercise.

„But in pharmacotherapy children must not be treated like „small adults“. Above all, even more than other doctors, paediatricians must give consideration to the long-term effects of the drugs they prescribe,“ warns Rascher. This is why in the past children have usually been treated with beta-blocker antihypertensives. These act by lowering the heart rate and reducing the strength of contractions. They also have the advantage of being easy to dose. „Nevertheless, prescription frequency has dwindled somewhat over recent years because some beta-blockers have undesirable effects on the metabolism, with one result being weight increase, for example,“ explains Rascher. „For young hypertension patients who tend to be overweight anyway, this is clearly not recommendable.“

Over recent years paediatricians have therefore tended to favor another type of drug, namely ACE inhibitors. „These drugs are more expensive, but act selectively on the body's natural blood pressure regulation system,“ explains Rascher. Angiotensin antagonists, also known as sartans, work in much the same way. They are currently being tested extensively on young hypertension sufferers. „This is a very positive development because it enables us to improve the treatment of children and adolescents. It would be advantageous if we could soon have similar studies for the older diuretics as well,“ says Rascher. For, as with adults, one single drug is not always enough. Doctors sometimes have to prescribe a combination of several different drugs when treating children and adolescents, too. „The more choice there is,“ says Rascher, „the more likely we are to find a suitable drug.“

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Official Press Conferences (during the Congress)

Time: Monday, 16 th June 2008; 12.30 - 13.30

Place: Room 43, ICC Berlin, Germany, (Language: German)

Time: Tuesday, 17 th June 2008; 12.30 - 13.30

Place: Room 43, ICC Berlin, Germany, (Language: English)

Time: Wednesday, 18 th June 2008 ; 12.30 - 13.30

Place: Room 43, ICC Berlin, Germany, (Language: English)

Time: Thursday, 19 th June 2008 ; 12.30 - 13.30

Place: Room 43, ICC Berlin, Germany, (Language: German)

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