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Oxaliplatin

Updated: September 12, 2020.

OVERVIEW

Introduction

Oxaliplatin is an intravenously administered platinum containing alkylating agent which is used for the treatment of advanced colorectal cancer. Oxaliplatin therapy is associated with a low rate of transient serum aminotransferase elevations, but is commonly associated with sinusoidal and vascular injury to the liver which can lead to sinusoidal obstruction syndrome and to nodular regenerative hyperplasia with noncirrhotic portal hypertension.

Background

Oxaliplatin (ox al" i pla' tin) is a cisplatin analog with a tetravalent platinum molecule which is referred to as a platinum coordination complex. Oxaliplatin acts as an alkylating agent causing cross linking between and within DNA strands leading to inhibition of DNA, RNA and protein synthesis and the triggering of programmed cell death, mostly in rapidly dividing cells. Oxaliplatin was approved for use in cancer chemotherapy in the United States in 2002. Its current indications are colorectal carcinoma and it is usually administered in combination with other agents such as 5-fluorouracil (5-FU), irinotecan or capecitabine. Oxaliplatin is available in an aqueous solution for injection in 50, 100 and 200 mg vials in generic forms and under the brand name Eloxatin. The typical dose regimen is a single infusion of oxaliplatin (85 mg/m²) on day 1 of each two-week course with leucovorin and 5-FU. Oxaliplatin should be administered only by health care professions with knowledge and experience in using cancer chemotherapeutic agents and in management of their complications. The platinum based antineoplastic agents have similar toxicities, including nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, bone marrow suppression, as well as neuro-, oto- and nephrotoxicity. They are also mutagenic, teratogenic and carcinogenic, and their use has been associated with an increased risk of secondary leukemias. Uncommon but potentially severe adverse events include anaphylaxis, neuropathy, interstitial pulmonary disease and fibrosis, hepatotoxicity and embryo-fetal toxicity.

Hepatotoxicity

Mild and transient elevations in serum aminotransferase levels are found in an appreciable proportion of patients taking oxaliplatin, but their relationship to oxaliplatin is often unclear. Chemotherapy with oxaliplatin has been associated with histological changes in the liver marked by sinusoidal dilatation, congestion and centrolobular necrosis indicative of sinusoidal obstruction syndrome. These changes are usually mild-to-moderate in severity and not clinically significant during the acute phase, but they can progress to clinically apparent sinusoidal obstruction syndrome or, with chronic therapy, to nodular regenerative hyperplasia with splenomegaly, thrombocytopenia and esophageal varices. Nodular regenerative hyperplasia typically requires 6

to 18 months to develop and arises after repeated cycles of chemotherapy with oxaliplatin. Serum enzyme and bilirubin elevations are minimal, the major laboratory finding being a progressive and persistent thrombocytopenia reflecting the development of splenomegaly and portal hypertension. The first clinical evidence of nodular regenerative hyperplasia may be ascites, esophageal variceal hemorrhage or hepatic encephalopathy. Attempts at hepatic resection, severe gastrointestinal bleeding and septicemia may trigger hepatic decompensation and liver failure. Interestingly, nodular regenerative hyperplasia and portal hypertension tend to improve slowly once chemotherapy is stopped, but the long term consequences of the changes are not well defined.

Likelihood score: A (well established cause of clinically apparent liver injury).

Mechanism of Injury

The cause of sinusoidal dilatation and central congestion after oxaliplatin therapy is unknown, but probably relates to injury to sinusoidal endothelial lining cells. While described largely after oxaliplatin therapy, similar changes may occur after therapy with the other platinum coordination complexes, alkylating agents and antimetabolites.

Outcome and Management

The majority of instances of sinusoidal dilatation, vascular injury and congestion found histologically after oxaliplatin therapy occur without significant serum enzyme elevations or clinically apparent liver injury. Rare instances of acute onset of sinusoidal obstruction syndrome with ascites and hepatic failure have been described after oxaliplatin therapy, but usually when given in combination with other antineoplastic agents. Repeated cycles of oxaliplatin and chronic therapy have been linked to nodular regenerative hyperplasia which can be associated with portal hypertension and complications of ascites, variceal hemorrhage and hepatic encephalopathy. There is likely to be cross sensitivity to liver toxicities of the various platinum coordination complexes and continued use or rechallenge after clinically apparent liver injury from oxaliplatin should be avoided. Routine monitoring of liver tests is recommended during courses of oxaliplatin therapy, but evidence of portal hypertension is better assessed using serial platelet counts or repeated radiologic evaluation of spleen size.

Drug Class: Antineoplastic Agents, Alkylating Agents

Other Drugs in the Subclass, Platinum Coordination Complexes: Carboplatin, Cisplatin

PRODUCT INFORMATION

REPRESENTATIVE TRADE NAMES

Oxaliplatin - Generic, Eloxatin®

DRUG CLASS

Antineoplastic Agents, Alkylating Agents

COMPLETE LABELING

Product labeling at DailyMed, National Library of Medicine, NIH

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CHEMICAL FORMULA AND STRUCTURE

| DRUG | CAS REGISTRY NUMBER | MOLECULAR FORMULA | STRUCTURE |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Oxaliplatin | 61825-94-3 | C8-H14-N2-O4-Pt | H N O O O |

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Abbreviations: BMI, body mass index; CT, computerized tomography; NRH, nodular regenerative hyperplasia; SOS, sinusoidal obstruction syndrome; HVPG, hepatic venous pressure gradient; SAMe, Sadenosylmethionine.

Zimmerman HJ. Oncotherapeutic and immunosuppressive agents. In, Zimmerman HJ. Hepatotoxicity: the adverse effects of drugs and other chemicals on the liver. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1999, pp. 673-708.

(Expert review of hepatotoxicity of cancer chemotherapeutic agents published in 1999; mentions that cisplatin had been reported to cause dose related serum enzyme elevations and has been linked to steatosis and necrosis, whereas carboplatin has been linked to rare instances of cholestatic and hepatocellular injury; oxaliplatin not discussed).

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(Review of liver injury to sinusoidal endothelial cells caused by medications mentions that oxaliplatin as capable of causing sinusoidal dilatation, peliosis hepatis, nodular regenerative hyperplasia and sinusoidal obstruction syndrome).

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(Among 235 patients undergoing bone marrow transplantation between 1982 and 1985, SOS developed in 52 [22%] of whom half died, making SOS the third most common cause of death in this population).

- Washington K, Lane KL, Meyers WC. Nodular regenerative hyperplasia in partial hepatectomy specimens. Am J Surg Pathol. 1993;17:1151–8. PubMed PMID: 8214260.
- (Pathological review of liver resections from 72 patients showed nodular regenerative hyperplasia in 5, all of whom had colon cancer metastases and had been treated with chemotherapy: usually 5-fluorouracil; 9 patients had hyperplastic foci some of whom had received cisplatin and other agents including cyclophosphamide, VP-16 and carmustine).
- Hartmann JT, Lipp H-P. Toxicity of platinum compounds. Expert Opin Pharmacother. 2003;4:889–901. PubMed PMID: 12783586.
- (Review of pharmacology, mechanism of action, adverse effects and tolerance of platinum containing alkylating agents; "Mild reversible increases in liver function tests can occur in patients who have received platinum compounds. However, the platinum compounds are generally not classified as hepatotoxic drugs").
- Rubbia-Brandt L, Audard V, Sartoretti P, Roth AD, Brezault C, Le Charpentier M, Dousset B, et al. Severe hepatic sinusoidal obstruction associated with oxaliplatin-based chemotherapy in patients with metastatic colorectal cancer. Ann Oncol. 2004;15:460–6. PubMed PMID: 14998849.
- (Among 153 patients undergoing hepatic resection for colon cancer, centrolobular congestion and necrosis was found in nontumor liver tissue in 51% of those who received neoadjuvant chemotherapy, but in none undergoing surgery alone; oxaliplatin as the most frequently implicated agent; follow up biopsies often showed fibrosis).
- Sebagh M, Plasse M, Lévi F, Adam R. Severe hepatic sinusoidal obstruction and oxaliplatin-based chemotherapy in patients with metastatic colorectal cancer: a real entity? Ann Oncol. 2005;16(2):331–Author reply 332-3. PubMed PMID: 15668292.
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- (69 year old man with adenocarcinoma of the rectum developed ascites after radiation and a fourth course of chemotherapy with capecitabine and oxaliplatin, with a hepatic venous pressure gradient of 18 mm Hg and liver biopsy showing sinusoidal obstruction syndrome and no cirrhosis [bilirubin and Alk P elevated but ALT normal], with progressive hepatic and multiorgan failure and death).
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- (Among patients undergoing hepatic resections for colorectal cancer metastases, steatohepatitis and liver injury was more common among the 14 who received oxaliplatin and/or irinotecan than 10 who received 5-FU alone or 13 given no chemotherapy).
- Rubbia-Brandt L, Mentha G, Terris B. Sinusoidal obstruction syndrome is a major feature of hepatic lesions associated with oxaliplatin neoadjuvant chemotherapy for liver colorectal metastases. J Am Coll Surg. 2006;202:199–200. PubMed PMID: 16377516.
- (Letter in response to Fernandez [2005] suggesting that some of the hepatic changes represented sinusoidal obstruction syndrome).

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- (Among 92 patients undergoing resection of colorectal liver metastases, those who received chemotherapy [mostly oxaliplatin and fluorouracil] were more likely to have vascular changes, but had similar rates of steatosis compared to those who did not receive chemotherapy).
- Vauthey JN, Pawlik TM, Ribero D, Wu TT, Zorzi D, Hoff PM, Xiong HQ, et al. Chemotherapy regimen predicts steatohepatitis and an increase in 90-day mortality after surgery for hepatic colorectal metastases. J Clin Oncol. 2006;24:2065–72. PubMed PMID: 16648507.
- (Among 406 patients undergoing hepatic resection for colorectal metastases, preoperative chemotherapy with oxaliplatin was associated with sinusoidal dilatation [19% vs 2%], whereas irinotecan was associated with steatohepatitis [20% vs 4.4%] which was associated with higher 90 day mortality rates).
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- (Retrospective analysis of 67 patients undergoing hepatic resection of colorectal liver metastasis, found preoperative chemotherapy was associated with higher rates of complications [38% vs 14%] and hepatic failure [11% vs 0%] compared to no chemotherapy, despite no difference in degree of elevation of liver tests during first 10 postoperative days).
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- (A 59 year old woman with bladder cancer who was an HBV carrier developed severe reactivation of hepatitis B after 2 cycles of chemotherapy with methotrexate, epiadriamycin and cisplatin, resolving with lamivudine and prednisolone therapy).
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(Systematic review of the literature on oxaliplatin and liver injury; histological vascular changes with sinusoidal damage occurs in at least 20% of patients treated with oxaliplatin, but it is not associated with an increase in mortality in most studies).

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- (Two men, ages 68 and 51 years, developed nodular regenerative hyperplasia after 6 cycles of oxaliplatin/capecitabine with minimal liver test abnormalities [bilirubin 2.3 and 1.2 mg/dL, ALT 23 and 57 U/L, Alk P 237 and 205 U/L], one dying of hepatic failure after partial hepatectomy of residual tumor, and the second developing variceal hemorrhage and encephalopathy after one resection but eventually recovering and tolerating a repeat hepatic resection 18 months later).
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- (Six patients developed noncirrhotic portal hypertension after 6 to 12 cycles of oxaliplatin and 5-FU chemotherapy [6-15 months] for metastatic colorectal cancer, including 3 men, 3 women, ages 37 to 69 years, all of whom developed thrombocytopenia [53-128,000/ μ L], splenomegaly and varices, 2 with variceal hemorrhage and 2 with ascites).
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- (Review of liver complications of bone marrow [hematopoietic cell] transplantation, which have become less frequent with better understanding of their causes and means of prevention; the rate of SOS has decreased

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- (Review of the role and liver toxicity of chemotherapy for colorectal metastases; oxaliplatin is associated with sinusoidal injury and irinotecan with chemotherapy induced steatohepatitis [CASH]).
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- (Among 334 patients undergoing hepatic resection for colorectal cancer metastases, marked hepatic steatosis was uncommon [9%] and correlated with BMI rather than chemotherapy, while sinusoidal lesions were present in 35% of cases and correlated with oxaliplatin use; neither correlated with immediate operative outcome).
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- (Spleen size as measured by CT increased [by an average of 22%] in 86% of 96 patients treated with oxaliplatin and 5FU for colorectal cancer and correlated with thrombocytopenia and sinusoidal injury seen on subsequent liver biopsy of 60 patients).
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- (Among 406 patients undergoing 478 liver resections for metastatic colorectal cancer at two European medical centers between 2015 and 2017, 68% had sinusoidal dilatation, 25% had steatosis, 10% had steatohepatitis and 18% had NRH, risk factors for NRH being preoperative oxaliplatin and low platelet counts but not routine liver test abnormalities).
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- (Among 64 patients with metastatic colorectal cancer receiving oxaliplatin-based adjuvant chemotherapy, sinusoidal injury occurred in 27-30% and steatohepatitis in 35-40% of patients, rates being similar in all age groups).
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- (Among 49 patients with lymphoma receiving autologous hematopoietic cell transplantation over a 2 year period at a single, French referral center, 4 of 19 who had received oxaliplatin-based cycles of chemotherapy developed severe SOS within 2-9 days compared to none of 30 who did not receive oxaliplatin).
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- (78 year old Japanese man presented with esophageal varices and splenomegaly 3.5 years after receiving 10 cycles of oxaliplatin and fluorouracil for metastatic colorectal cancer [bilirubin1.0, ALT 16 U/L, Alk P 269 U/L, platelets $65,000/\mu$ L], liver biopsy showing no evidence of fibrosis).
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- (Analysis of 3 large health databases for compliance with recommendations for liver test monitoring when initiating therapy with 9 drugs found compliance was highest for oxaliplatin [75%], somewhat lower for rifampin [68%], tolcapone [67%], albendazole [66%] and azathioprine [61%], and poor for pentamidine [21%], felbamate [22%], succimer [29%] and ketoconazole [32%]).
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- (46 year old woman with metastatic colorectal carcinoma experienced an anaphylactic reaction to a second infusion of oxaliplatin with subsequent abnormal liver tests [bilirubin 0.8 rising to 1.4 mg/dL, ALT 110 to 1010 U/L, Alk P 281 to 313 U/L], with profound thrombocytopenia [7000/μL] and rapid resolution within 2-3 weeks with prednisone therapy).
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- (Among 23 patients with SOS after autologous HCT for lymphoma identified in a French national survey, 21 had received oxaliplatin compared to only 13 of 23 matched controls).
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- (65 year old man with refractory metastatic lung carcinoid tumor developed confusion and coma 11 days into a 3-week regimen of capecitabine [1.6 mg/m2 daily for 15 days] and oxaliplatin [104 mg/m2 on day 1] with ammonia of 167 μmol/L but normal bilirubin and aminotransferase levels, resolving within 3 days of stopping capecitabine).