Ritonavir plus saquinavir versus single protease inhibitor therapy in protease inhibitor-naive HIV-infected patients: the Swiss HIV Cohort Study

H C Bucher, M Bichsel, P Taffé, H Furrer, A Telenti, B Hirschel, R Weber, E Bernasconi, Pietro Vernazza, C Minder, M Battegay & Swiss HIV Cohort Study

OBJECTIVES: To compare the response to ritonavir (RTV) plus saquinavir (SQV) with single protease inhibitor (PI) therapies among PI-naive HIV-1 infected individuals. METHODS: Response to treatment was analysed according to the intent-to-treat principle in a prospective observational cohort study of 177 patients who between May 1995 and March 2000 started a double PI therapy with RTV and SQV (nonboosting dosages) plus at least one nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NRTI) and 2,214 patients with a single PI therapy plus two NRTIs. We used survival analysis and Cox's proportional hazard regression methods. The primary endpoint was the time to a plasma viral load of < 400 copies/mL. Secondary endpoints were taken as a gain in the CD4 count of > 100 cells/μL, and change of initial PI for any reason. RESULTS: Baseline characteristics in both treatment groups were balanced. Median follow-up in both groups was 10.4 months. Time to an HIV-1 viral load of < 400 copies/mL and an increase in the CD4 count of > 100 x 10(6) cells/μL was shorter for RTV plus SQV compared with single PI regimens (log rank test for each endpoint P < 0.05). The adjusted hazard ratios of RTV plus SQV compared with single PI regimens were 1.21 (95% confidence interval 0.99-1.47) for achieving an HIV-1 viral load of < 400 copies/mL, 1.12 (0.88-1.42) for an increase in the CD4 count of > 100 cells/μL, and 0.90 (0.73-1.11) for change of first PI regimen. CONCLUSIONS: Treatment with RTV plus SQV compared with single PI regimens appeared to give similar results for virological or immunological response.

type: journal paper/review (English)
date of publishing: 10-2002
journal title: HIV medicine (3/4)
ISSN print: 1464-2662
pages: 247-53