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A Randomized Trial of Early Endovenous Ablation in Venous Ulceration*Gohel MS, et al. N Engl J Med 2018; 378: 2105–114.***Abstract**

Background: Venous disease is the most common cause of leg ulceration. Although compression therapy improves venous ulcer healing, it does not treat the underlying causes of venous hypertension. Treatment of superficial venous reflux has been shown to reduce the rate of ulcer recurrence, but the effect of early endovenous ablation of superficial venous reflux on ulcer healing remains unclear.

Methods: In a trial conducted at 20 centers in the United Kingdom, we randomly assigned 450 patients with venous leg ulcers to receive compression therapy and undergo early endovenous ablation of superficial venous reflux within 2 weeks after randomization (early-intervention group) or to receive compression therapy alone, with consideration of endovenous ablation deferred until after the ulcer was healed or until 6 months after randomization if

the ulcer was unhealed (deferred-intervention group). The primary outcome was the time to ulcer healing. Secondary outcomes were the rate of ulcer healing at 24 weeks, the rate of ulcer recurrence, the length of time free from ulcers (ulcer-free time) during the first year after randomization, and patient-reported health-related quality of life. **Results:** Patient and clinical characteristics at baseline were similar in the two treatment groups. The time to ulcer healing was shorter in the early-intervention group than in the deferred-intervention group; more patients had healed ulcers with early intervention (hazard ratio for ulcer healing, 1.38; 95% confidence interval [CI], 1.13 to 1.68; $p = 0.001$). The median time to ulcer healing was 56 days (95% CI, 49 to 66) in the early-intervention group and 82 days (95% CI, 69 to 92) in the deferred-intervention group. The rate of

ulcer healing at 24 weeks was 85.6% in the early-intervention group and 76.3% in the deferred-intervention group. The median ulcer-free time during the first year after trial enrollment was 306 days (interquartile range, 240 to 328) in the early-intervention group and 278 days (interquartile range, 175 to 324) in the deferred-intervention group ($P = 0.002$). The most common procedural complications of endovenous ablation were pain and deep-vein thrombosis.

Conclusions: Early endovenous ablation of superficial venous reflux resulted in faster healing of venous leg ulcers and more time free from ulcers than deferred endovenous ablation. (Funded by the National Institute for Health Research Health Technology Assessment Program; EVRA Current Controlled Trials number, ISRCTN02335796.)

Kommentar

Eine frühe endovenöse Ablation verbesserte die Heilungschancen im Vergleich zur alleinigen Kompressionstherapie bei venösem Ulcus cruris in dieser randomisierten Studie aus Großbritannien. Wesentliche Limitationen der Studie sind allerdings, dass Patienten mit mehr als seit 6 Monaten bestehenden Ulzera ausgeschlossen und die teilnehmenden Patienten stark vorselektiert waren – die 450 randomisierten Studienteilnehmer wurden aus einer großen Gruppe von

6500 Patienten ausgewählt. Zudem wurde auch nicht untersucht, welche Methode sich am besten für die endovenöse Ablation eignet.

Praxisrelevanz

Bei geeigneten Patienten sollte frühzeitig an eine endovenöse Ablation bei venösem Ulcus cruris gedacht werden.

Omega-3 fatty acids for the primary and secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease*Abdelhamid AS, et al. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2018, Issue 7. Art. No.: CD003177. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD003177.pub3.***Abstract**

Background: Researchers have suggested that omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids from oily fish (long-chain omega-3 (LCn3), including eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)), as well as from plants (alpha-linolenic acid (ALA)) benefit cardiovascular health. Guidelines recommend increasing omega-3-rich foods, and

sometimes supplementation, but recent trials have not confirmed this.

Objectives: To assess effects of increased intake of fish- and plant-based omega-3 for all-cause mortality, cardiovascular (CVD) events, adiposity and lipids.

Search methods: We searched CENTRAL, MEDLINE and Embase to

April 2017, plus ClinicalTrials.gov and World Health Organization International Clinical Trials Registry to September 2016, with no language restrictions. We handsearched systematic review references and bibliographies and contacted authors.

Selection criteria: We included randomised controlled trials (RCTs) that

lasted at least 12 months and compared supplementation and/or advice to increase LCn3 or ALA intake versus usual or lower intake.

Data collection and analysis: Two review authors independently assessed studies for inclusion, extracted data and assessed validity. We performed separate random-effects meta-analysis for ALA and LCn3 interventions, and assessed dose-response relationships through meta-regression.

Main results: We included 79 RCTs (112,059 participants) in this review update and found that 25 were at low summary risk of bias. Trials were of 12 to 72 months' duration and included adults at varying cardiovascular risk, mainly in high-income countries. Most studies assessed LCn3 supplementation with capsules, but some used LCn3 or ALA-rich or enriched foods or dietary advice compared to placebo or usual diet. Meta-analysis and sensitivity analyses suggested little or no effect of increasing LCn3 on all-cause mortality (RR 0.98, 95% CI 0.90 to 1.03, 92,653 participants; 8189 deaths in 39 trials, high-quality evidence), cardiovascular mortality (RR 0.95, 95% CI 0.87 to 1.03, 67,772 participants; 4544 CVD deaths in 25 RCTs), cardiovascular events (RR 0.99, 95% CI 0.94 to 1.04, 90,378 participants; 14,737 people experienced events in 38 trials, high-quality evidence), coronary heart disease (CHD) mortality (RR 0.93, 95% CI 0.79 to 1.09,

73,491 participants; 1596 CHD deaths in 21 RCTs), stroke (RR 1.06, 95% CI 0.96 to 1.16, 89,358 participants; 1822 strokes in 28 trials) or arrhythmia (RR 0.97, 95% CI 0.90 to 1.05, 53,796 participants; 3788 people experienced arrhythmia in 28 RCTs). There was a suggestion that LCn3 reduced CHD events (RR 0.93, 95% CI 0.88 to 0.97, 84,301 participants; 5469 people experienced CHD events in 28 RCTs); however, this was not maintained in sensitivity analyses – LCn3 probably makes little or no difference to CHD event risk. All evidence was of moderate GRADE quality, except as noted. Increasing ALA intake probably makes little or no difference to all-cause mortality (RR 1.01, 95% CI 0.84 to 1.20, 19,327 participants; 459 deaths, 5 RCTs), cardiovascular mortality (RR 0.96, 95% CI 0.74 to 1.25, 18,619 participants; 219 cardiovascular deaths, 4 RCTs), and it may make little or no difference to CHD events (RR 1.00, 95% CI 0.80 to 1.22, 19,061 participants, 397 CHD events, 4 RCTs, low-quality evidence). However, increased ALA may slightly reduce risk of cardiovascular events (from 4.8% to 4.7%, RR 0.95, 95% CI 0.83 to 1.07, 19,327 participants; 884 CVD events, 5 RCTs, low-quality evidence), and probably reduces risk of CHD mortality (1.1% to 1.0%, RR 0.95, 95% CI 0.72 to 1.26, 18,353 participants; 193 CHD deaths, 3 RCTs), and arrhythmia (3.3% to 2.6%, RR 0.79,

95% CI 0.57 to 1.10, 4,837 participants; 141 events, 1 RCT). Effects on stroke are unclear.

Sensitivity analysis retaining only trials at low summary risk of bias moved effect sizes towards the null (RR 1.0) for all LCn3 primary outcomes except arrhythmias, but for most ALA outcomes, effect sizes moved to suggest protection. LCn3 funnel plots suggested that adding in missing studies/results would move effect sizes towards null for most primary outcomes. There were no dose or duration effects in subgrouping or meta-regression.

There was no evidence that increasing LCn3 or ALA altered serious adverse events, adiposity or lipids, although LCn3 slightly reduced triglycerides and increased HDL. ALA probably reduces HDL (high or moderate quality evidence).

Authors' conclusions: This is the most extensive systematic assessment of effects of omega 3 fats on cardiovascular health to date. Moderate and high quality evidence suggests that increasing EPA and DHA has little or no effect on mortality or cardiovascular health (evidence mainly from supplement trials). Previous suggestions of benefits from EPA and DHA supplements appear to spring from trials with higher risk of bias. Low-quality evidence suggests ALA may slightly reduce CVD event risk, CHD mortality and arrhythmia.

Kommentar

Ein rezenten Cochrane-Systematic-Review untersuchte die Auswirkungen des Verzehrs von zusätzlichen Omega-3-Fettsäuren im Vergleich zum normalen oder niedrigeren Verzehr auf Herz-Kreislauf Erkrankungen. Es wurden 79 randomisierten Studien mit 112.059 Teilnehmern zusammengefasst, von denen 25 Untersuchungen als sehr vertrauenswürdig eingestuft wurden. In den meisten Studien wurden Nahrungsergänzungsmitteln mit langketten Omega-3-Fettsäuren in Kapselform versus Placebo verglichen. In der Meta-Analyse zeigte sich kein eindeutiger Hinweis, dass die zusätzliche Einnahme

von Omega-3-Fettsäuren mittels Nahrungsergänzungsmittel das Risiko für kardiovaskuläre Ereignisse, koronare Herztoode, koronare Herzerkrankungseignisse, Schlaganfall oder Herzrhythmusstörungen wesentlich reduziert.

Praxisrelevanz

Die derzeitige Datenlage unterstützt nicht die Einnahme von Nahrungsergänzungsmittel mit Omega-3-Fettsäuren zur Reduktion des kardiovaskulären Risikos.

■ Edoxaban Plus Aspirin vs Dual Antiplatelet Therapy in Endovascular Treatment of Patients With Peripheral Artery Disease: Results of the ePAD Trial

Moll F, et al. *J Endovasc Ther* 2018; 25: 158–68.

Abstract

Purpose: To report a randomized study that investigated the safety (risk of major bleeds) and potential efficacy of edoxaban, an oral anticoagulant that targets the major components of arterial thrombi, to prevent loss of patency following endovascular treatment (EVT).

Methods: Between February 2012 and June 2014, 203 patients who underwent femoropopliteal EVT were randomized to receive aspirin plus edoxaban or aspirin plus clopidogrel for 3 months in the Edoxaban in Peripheral Arterial Disease (ePAD) study (ClinicalTrials.gov identifier [NCT01802775](#)). Randomization assigned 101 patients (mean age 68.0 ± 10.4 years; 67 men) to the edoxaban group and 102 patients (mean age 66.7 ± 8.6 years; 78 men) to

the clopidogrel group. The primary safety endpoint was bleeding as classified by the TIMI (Thrombolysis in Myocardial Infarction) criteria and ISTH (International Society of Thrombosis and Hemostasis) criteria; the efficacy endpoint was the rate of restenosis/reocclusion.

Results: There were no major or life-threatening bleeding events in the edoxaban group, while there were 2 major and 2 life-threatening bleeding events in the clopidogrel group by the TIMI criteria. By the ISTH classification, there was 1 major and 1 life-threatening bleeding event vs 5 major and 2 life-threatening bleeding events, respectively [relative risk (RR) 0.20, 95% confidence interval (CI) 0.02 to 1.70]. The bleeding risk was not statistically different with either treatment when assessed by TIMI or ISTH. Following 6 months of observation, there was a lower incidence of restenosis/reocclusion with edoxaban compared with clopidogrel (30.9% vs 34.7%; RR 0.89, 95% CI 0.59 to 1.34, $p = 0.643$).

Conclusions: These results suggest that patients who have undergone EVT have similar risks for major and life-threatening bleeding events with edoxaban and aspirin compared with clopidogrel and aspirin. The incidence of restenosis/reocclusion events, while not statistically different, was lower with edoxaban and aspirin, but an adequately sized trial will be needed to confirm these findings.

Kommentar

Die vorgestellte ePAD-Studie untersuchte eine antithrombotische Therapie mit Edoxaban versus Clopidogrel für 3 Monate in Patienten nach femoropoplitealer endovaskulärer Revaskularisation. Alle Patienten nahmen zusätzlich Aspirin ein. Nach 6 Monaten zeigte sich numerisch eine geringere Zahl an schweren Blutungen und Restenose in der Edoxaban-Gruppe. Allerdings war die Studie mit 203 randomisierten Patienten zu klein, um diese Frage mit ausreichender statistischer Power abschließend zu beurteilen.

■ Praxisrelevanz

Die Kombination eines neuen oralen Antikoagulans mit Aspirin könnte nach endovaskulären Interventionen eine interessante Alternative zur dualen Thrombozytenaggregationshemmung darstellen. Allerdings bedarf es noch weiterer Untersuchungen, bis eine Empfehlung ausgesprochen werden kann. Wesentlich werden hier die Ergebnisse der Voyager-Studie sein, die derzeit bei ca. 6500 Patienten Aspirin plus Rivaroxaban versus Aspirin plus Placebo nach peripherer Revaskularisation untersucht.

Korrespondenzadresse:

PD Dr. Sabine Steiner
Klinik und Poliklinik für Angiologie
Universitätsklinikum Leipzig
D-04103 Leipzig, Liebigstraße 20
E-Mail: sabine.steiner@medizin.uni-leipzig.de

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