Acute HCV Management
Importance of predictors to SVC

Prof. Gamal Esmat
Endemic Medicine & Hepatology Department, Cairo University
Director of Viral Hepatitis Treatment Centers, Egypt
www.gamalesmat.com
Cairo University
TO WAIT OR TO TREAT EARLY?

While studies have shown that treatment during the acute phase can achieve high (72%–98%) success rates, the optimal regimen and timing of treatment are still a matter of debate.

Wedemyer et al. Hepatology, 2003
One crucial issue that remains to be resolved is whether physicians should treat all patients diagnosed with acute hepatitis C, or should wait and treat only those who failed to clear the virus in the first few months after infection.
Spontaneous Viral Clearance (SVC) for Acute HCV is High & Justifies Treatment Delay

- 60 patients with acute HCV (36 genotype 1) followed
  - Spontaneous clearance is 52% of 51 symptomatic cases
  - No asymptomatic patient cleared virus
  - SVR achieved in 81% of symptomatic patients without spontaneous clearance who were treated > 3 mos after symptom onset with IFN ± RBV.

Gerlach et al. Gastroenterol. 2003
Wait for SVC (Advantages& Drawbacks)

- Although waiting for SVC has the advantage of avoiding the treatment side effects and reducing the cost, yet, it has some drawbacks.
  - Patients may be lost during follow-up.
  - Some patients have an atypical pattern of viremia, with transient non-detection of viremia in the first six months after onset of symptoms.

Summary of AASLD recommendations

• Patients with acute HCV should be considered for IFN-based therapy.

• Treatment can be delayed 8-12 weeks after acute onset to allow for spontaneous resolution.

• Although standard IFN monotherapy effective in this population, peg-IFN can be considered due to greater ease of administration.

• No definitive recommendation about optimal duration of treatment for acute hepatitis C; however, it is reasonable to treat for \( \geq 12 \) weeks, and 24 weeks may be considered

Ghany et al., Hepatology 2009; 49: 1335-1374
FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT SVC
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Source of infection:

– In post-transfusion aHCV, the rate of SVC is around 25%
– In non-post-transfusion cases, it varies from 11–14%.

FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT SVC

Symptomatic patients

- Patients with jaundice or marked elevation of transaminases seem more prone to recover spontaneously than asymptomatic ones with percentages of spontaneous recovery up to 50%.

FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT SVC

Ethnicity:
- White populations are more commonly clearing the virus than other races.

Age:
- Younger patients have a better chance to clear the virus spontaneously.

Gender:
- Women were found more prone to SVC than men.

Yamakawa Y et al. J Viral Hepat, 1996
Higher clearance of HCV infection in females compared to males.

- An Egyptian study included 4720 residents.
- Overall HCV antibody prevalence was 19.3%.
- Of those with HCV antibodies (n=910), 61.5% had chronic HCV infection.
- Compared to males, females were more likely to have cleared the virus (44.6% versus 33.7%, respectively, P = 0.001). Control for confounding factors did not alter the positive association between female gender and viral clearance.

Bakr et al., Gut, 2006
FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT SVC

HLA typing
– Patients with HLA II alleles are more commonly clearing the virus than other races.

Specific CD4
– The strength and pattern of HCV-specific CD4 cell responses may predict SVC.

Thursz et al. Lancet 1999
FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT SVC

IL-28B polymorphism:

It can be used as predictor of SVC as well as those who are more liable for SVR on treatment.

*Pearlman, Current Gastroenterology Reports, 2011.*
Pearlman BL, *Current Gastroenterology Reports*, 2011
Predictors of SVC

• Despite all these factors, for a given person the outcome cannot be predicted by clinical features or single laboratory test.

• From the previously mentioned data, a predictive test or scoring system is needed to determine whether to treat early or to wait for a spontaneous clearance.
Thank you

gesmat@gamalesmat.com