

# A nutritional supplement for treating chronic hepatitis C: Viusid

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A research team from Cuba investigated the efficacy of Viusid, a nutritional supplement, as an antioxidant and an immunomodulator in patients with chronic hepatitis C. Their results showed that treatment with Viusid leads to a notable improvement of oxidative stress and immunological parameters in such patients.

The pathogenesis of chronic [hepatitis C](#) (CHC) is associated with severe oxidative stress and non-selective immunological disturbance that lead to necroinflammation and the progression of fibrosis. Several trials have suggested that antioxidant and immunostimulant therapies may have a beneficial effect. Two previous clinical studies have reported that the Viusid related effect on histologic features, especially fibrosis, appears to be associated with antioxidant and/or immunomodulatory properties. However, the putative mechanism of action of Viusid is unknown.

A research article to be published on June 7, 2010 in the [World Journal of Gastroenterology](#) addresses this question. The authors reported the results of a randomized double-blind and placebo-controlled study to evaluate the effect of Viusid on oxidative stress and cytokine parameters in patients with CHC who had been nonresponders to previous [antiviral therapy](#) with peginterferon plus ribavirin and infected with genotype 1.

Their results show that Viusid improves oxidative stress through reduction of lipid peroxidation products and has an immunomodulatory effect on [cytokine](#) secretion via increased production of IFN- $\gamma$  and IL-10, decreased production of IL-1 $\alpha$ , and stabilized TNF- $\alpha$  secretion in

patients with CHC who have failed previous antiviral treatment. Thus, Viusid is an interesting strategy of treatment for those patients who don't eradicate their viral infection or when antiviral treatment is contraindicated (decompensated cirrhosis). The administration of Viusid was well tolerated. Further studies are needed to evaluate the clinical impact of the administration of Viusid in patients with end-stage liver disease secondary to CHC.

**More information:** Gomez EV, Perez YM, Sanchez HV, Forment GR, Soler EA, Bertot LC, Garcia AY, del Rosario Abreu Vazquez M, Fabian LG. Antioxidant and immunomodulatory effects of Viusid in patients with chronic hepatitis C. *World J Gastroenterol* 2010; 16(21): 2638-2647 [www.wjgnet.com/1007-9327/full/v16/i21/2638.htm](http://www.wjgnet.com/1007-9327/full/v16/i21/2638.htm)

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