

Bortezomib ups response, survival in multiple myeloma

July 23 2012



For patients with newly diagnosed multiple myeloma, induction treatment with a combination of bortezomib, doxorubicin, and dexamethasone followed by bortezomib maintenance therapy improves complete response, progression-free survival, and overall survival rates, according to a study published online July 16 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

(HealthDay) -- For patients with newly diagnosed multiple myeloma (MM), induction treatment with a combination of bortezomib, doxorubicin, and dexamethasone (PAD) followed by bortezomib maintenance therapy improves complete response (CR), progression-free survival (PFS), and overall survival (OS) rates, according to a study published online July 16 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

Pieter Sonneveld, M.D., Ph.D., of the Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, Netherlands, and colleagues conducted an open-label,

randomized phase III trial involving 827 patients with newly diagnosed, symptomatic MM. Participants were randomized to receive induction therapy with vincristine, [doxorubicin](#), and dexamethasone (VAD) or PAD, followed by high-dose [melphalan](#) and autologous stem-cell transplantation. VAD-treated patients received thalidomide as the maintenance treatment and PAD-treated patients received maintenance [bortezomib](#).

Compared to VAD, the researchers found that PAD induction yielded statistically significant superior CR and near CR rates (31 versus 15 percent). The CR rate was also significantly improved with [bortezomib maintenance therapy](#) (49 versus 34 percent). Compared to those treated with VAD, patients treated with PAD had superior PFS after a median of 41 months (median 35 versus 28 months; hazard ratio, 0.75; P = 0.002) and overall survival was superior in multivariate analysis (hazard ratio, 0.77; P = 0.049). The benefits of bortezomib induction and maintenance therapy were greatest in high-risk patients with creatinine levels in excess of 2 mg/dL and in those with deletion 17p13.

"This randomized multicenter trial in patients with MM who were eligible for high-dose therapy demonstrates that bortezomib during induction and maintenance treatment results in a better response, quality of response, PFS, and OS," the authors write.

The study was funded in part by Janssen-Cilag-Ortho Biotech. Several authors and the German Multicenter Myeloma Group disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

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Citation: Bortezomib ups response, survival in multiple myeloma (2012, July 23) retrieved 10 April 2024 from

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