

New treatment offers hope for short-bowel syndrome patients

July 18 2013

A new drug, teduglutide, offers significant relief for patients with short-bowel syndrome intestinal failure who are reliant on intravenous nutrition, according to a new study in *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*, the official clinical practice journal of the American Gastroenterological Association. Patients with this relatively rare condition experience massive bowel loss and are unable to absorb nutrients, vitamins and water from digested foods. They rely on parenteral nutrition, or intravenous feeding, to deliver their daily nutrients.

"Short-bowel syndrome is a devastating condition, and without parenteral nutrition patients would not survive. However, this treatment method is labor-intensive, expensive and carries complications, including chronic infection, blood clots and [liver failure](#)," said Stephen J. D. O'Keefe, MD, MSc, FRCP, Division of Gastroenterology, University of Pittsburgh Medical School, PA, and lead study author. "Teduglutide, a new form of therapy, offers potential to significantly reduce intravenous nutrition dependency and improve the quality of life for patients."

Teduglutide is an injection administered once daily that helps improve intestinal absorption of fluids and nutrients, reducing the frequency and volume of parenteral nutrition.

Dr. O'Keefe and colleagues conducted a year-long trial to determine the safety, tolerability and clinical efficacy of teduglutide on patients with short-bowel syndrome. After 52 weeks, 68 percent of patients on just a

low dose of teduglutide experienced lessened parenteral nutrition dependency and there was a greater than 20 percent reduction in IV-fluid requirements.

Remarkably, the study documented multiple patients who received complete independence from parenteral nutrition. These findings instill hope that short-bowel syndrome patients can achieve a significantly enhanced quality of life, free of [sleep disturbances](#) and limited social activities.

Teduglutide recently received FDA approval for individuals with short-bowel syndrome who are dependent on parenteral nutrition or intravenous therapy despite optimal medical management. There are no contraindications and no time limit on therapy. Physicians planning to prescribe the drug need to be knowledgeable in its use and potential side effects, which include gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting), headache and common cold-like symptoms. Further studies are needed to assess teduglutide's safety and efficacy long term.

Provided by American Gastroenterological Association

Citation: New treatment offers hope for short-bowel syndrome patients (2013, July 18) retrieved 28 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-07-treatment-short-bowel-syndrome-patients.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--