IMPACT OF DIRECT-ACTING ANTIVIRAL TREATMENT ON MORTALITY RELATED TO EXTRAHEPATIC MANIFESTATIONS: FINDINGS FROM A LARGE POPULATION-BASED COHORT IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Jeong D1,2, Wong S2, Karim ME1,3, Bartlett S1,2, Wilton J2, Damascene MJ1,2, Velasquez H2, Binka M2, Adu P1,2, Pearce M2, Yu A2, Alvarez M3, Samji H4, Abdia Y2, Krajden M1,2, Janjua N1,2

1 University of British Columbia, Vancouver British Columbia, Canada
2 British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, Vancouver British Columbia, Canada
3 Centre for Health Evaluation and Outcome Sciences, Vancouver British Columbia, Canada
4 Simon Fraser University, Burnaby British Columbia, Canada

Background:
Chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is associated with mortality due to extrahepatic manifestations (EHM). The sustained virologic response (SVR) following the highly effective direct-acting antivirals (DAA) has been linked to decrease all-cause and liver-related mortality. However, evidence on the impact of DAA on EHM-related mortality is lacking.

Methods:
The British Columbia (BC) Hepatitis Testers Cohort includes ~1.3 million people tested for HCV and is linked with various administrative health data. We compared three groups of individuals: treated & SVR, treated & no-SVR, and untreated. EHM-mortality included deaths due to diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, cardiovascular, cerebrovascular, renal and neurocognitive diseases. Eligible individuals were followed to the earliest of 1) EHM-related-death; 2) other death, or 3) end of study (2019/12/31). To adjust for differences in baseline characteristics, we estimated the inverse probability of treatment weights (IPTW). Then, we used IPTW-weighted multivariable subdistributional hazards model adjusting for competing risk and confounders.

Results:
Study population included 10,694 treated (10,254 SVR, 440 no-SVR) and 10,694 untreated individuals. Among untreated people, 44.4% had history of injection drug use (IDU). Among those who received treatment, 33.4% of those with SVR and 50.9% of those with no-SVR had history of IDU. EHM-mortality rate was 5.86 per 1,000 PYFU (95% confidence interval [CI] 5.00-6.87) for treated & SVR; 25.32 per 1,000 PYFU (95% CI 16.67-38.45) for treated & no-SVR; and 29.40 per 1,000 PYFU (95% CI 27.21-31.76) for untreated individuals. In multivariable model, treated & SVR group had the greatest reduction in EHM-mortality (adjusted hazard ratio [aHR] 0.16, 95% CI 0.13-0.20), followed by treated & no-SVR group (aHR 0.57, 95% CI 0.34-0.94) compared to untreated group.

Conclusion:
Virologic cure of HCV following DAA treatment was associated with a significant reduction in EHM-mortality. This highlights the crucial need of providing diagnosis and treatment for people living with HCV infection to reduce extrahepatic mortality.

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