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Gemtuzumab Ozogamicin

Updated: March 9, 2018.

OVERVIEW

Introduction

Gemtuzumab ozogamicin is a humanized monoclonal antibody conjugate which is used in the therapy of acute myelogenous leukemia. Gemtuzumab ozogamicin has been linked to transient serum enzyme elevations during therapy and not uncommon instances of acute sinusoidal obstruction syndrome which can be severe and even fatal.

Background

Gemtuzumab (jem tooz' ue mab) ozogamicin (oh" zoe ga mye' sin) is a humanized monoclonal IgG4 antibody to the human CD33 cell surface marker which is highly expressed on acute myelogenous leukemia cells. The monoclonal antibody is conjugated to a cytotoxic molecule, ozogamicin. When gemtuzumab binds to CD33, it is internalized and the ozogamicin is released by the action of lysosomal enzymes on the linker molecule that joins the monoclonal antibody and cytotoxic molecule. The intracellular ozogamicin results in apoptotic cell death. This monoclonal antibody conjugate has been shown to be effective in inducing remissions in refractory acute myelogenous leukemia in patients over the age of 60 years and was given accelerated approval for this indication in the United States in 2000. A subsequent randomized controlled trial, however, showed that the mortality rate was higher with gemtuzumab ozogamicin than with conventional therapy and the monoclonal antibody conjugate was withdrawn from use in 2010. Further studies suggested that a modified dosing schedule [total of 9 mg/m² given over days 1 and 4 or days 1, 4 and 7 was effective in prolonging event-free survival in patients with acute myelogenous leukemia and had a lower rate of severe hepatic injury than regimens using the 9 mg/m² dose over one day. Accordingly, gemtuzumab ozogamicin was approved and reintroduced as a therapy of acute myelogenous leukemia in 2017. Gemtuzumab ozogamicin is available in powder for reconstitution in single dose vials of 4.5 mg under the brand name Mylotarg. The typical recommended dose regimen for induction is 3 mg/m² on days 1, 4 and 7 by intravenous infusion over 2 hours. Gemtuzumab ozogamicin can be given by itself or in combination with daunorubicin and cytarabine. Doses for continuation are generally a single dose of 3 mg/ meter squared with each course. Common side effects included infusion reactions with fever, nausea, chills, hypotension and shortness of breath and subsequent adverse events of neutropenia and thrombocytopenia. Less common, but serious side effects included anaphylactic reactions, severe neutropenia, infections and acute hepatic failure. Gemtumuzumab ozogamicin should be administered only by physicians with training and expertise in cancer chemotherapy and management of its potential adverse effects.

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Hepatotoxicity

In publications on the large scale trials of gemtuzumab ozogamicin, up to half of patients had serum ALT or AST elevations during therapy which were greater than 5 times the upper limit of normal (ULN) in 10% to 16%. Hyperbilirubinemia was also common during gemtuzumab therapy. More importantly, a variable proportion (ranging from 2% to 35%) of patients developed clinically apparent sinusoidal obstruction syndrome (SOS). Symptoms of nausea, right upper quadrant pain, weight gain and abdominal distension (from ascites) arose within 5 to 20 days of the infusion and were followed by progressive rise in bilirubin, serum aminotransferase and alkaline phosphatase levels. Recent studies using lower and fractionated regimens of administration of gemtuzumab ozogamicin have reported rates of sinusoidal obstruction syndrome of 5% (6/131) compared to 0% with standard chemotherapy. In general, SOS that is severe enough to cause clinical symptoms and signs has an extremely poor prognosis, with a mortality rate as high as 70%, most patients dying of multiorgan failure. Risk factors for developing SOS after gemtuzumab ozogamicin therapy included allogenic hematopoietic cell transplantation, use of other antineoplastic agents and presence of preexisting liver disease. There are no proven means of prevention or treatment of SOS due to gemtuzumab ozogamicin, although pretreatment with ursodiol and acute management with defibrotide are often employed.

Likelihood score: A (well known cause of clinically significant liver injury, typically the result of sinusoidal obstruction syndrome).

Mechanism of Injury

The cause of the serum enzyme elevations during gemtuzumab ozogamicin therapy is not known, but it is likely due to direct toxicity of the conjugate. The propensity of gemtuzumab ozogamicin to cause sinusoidal obstruction syndrome is perhaps due to the fact that hepatic sinusoidal endothelial cells express CD33 on the cell surface and the antibody conjugate may be taken up preferentially by these cells, resulting in their damage and release of apoptotic fragments into sinusoids causing obstruction.

Outcome and Management

The serum aminotransferase elevations that occur during gemtuzumab ozogamicin therapy are generally transient, mild and asymptomatic and do not require dose modification or delay in therapy. Elevations above 5 times the upper limit of normal should lead to more careful monitoring and suspension of further infusions, at least until levels return to normal or near normal levels. Patients receiving gemtuzumab ozogamicin should be carefully monitored before, during and after each course of therapy and treatment discontinued if symptoms, signs of laboratory evidence of sinusoidal obstruction syndrome arise.

Drug Class: Antineoplastic Agents, Monoclonal Antibodies

PRODUCT INFORMATION

REPRESENTATIVE TRADE NAMES

Gemtuzumab Ozogamicin - Mylotarg®

DRUG CLASS

Antineoplastic Agents

COMPLETE LABELING

Product labeling at DailyMed, National Library of Medicine, NIH

CHEMICAL FORMULA AND STRUCTURE

DRUG	CAS REGISTRY NO.	MOLECULAR FORMULA	STRUCTURE
Gemtuzumab Ozogamicin	356547-88-1	Monoclonal Antibody	Not Available

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

References updated: 09 March 2018

Abbreviations used: AML, acute myelogenous leukemia; SOS, sinusoidal obstruction syndrome; HCT, hematopoietic cell transplantation.

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- Review of agents that damage liver sinusoidal cells, including gemtuzumab ozogamicin, mentions that CD33 which is present on leukemic blast cells is also present on liver sinusoidal endothelial cells).
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- (*Textbook of pharmacology and therapeutics*).
- Gemtuzumab for relapsed acute myeloid leukemia. Med Lett Drugs Ther 2000; 42: 67-8. PubMed PMID: 10908423.
- (Concise review of the mechanism of action, efficacy and safety of gemtuzumab in acute myeloid leukemia [AML]; mentions that it has been associated with hyperbilirubinemia, serum enzyme elevations and one case of hepatic failure).
- Neumeister P, Eibl M, Zinke-Cerwenka W, Scarpatetti M, Sill H, Linkesch W. Hepatic veno-occlusive disease in two patients with relapsed acute myeloid leukemia treated with anti-CD33 calicheamicin (CMA-676) immunoconjugate. Ann Hematol 2001; 80: 119-20. PubMed PMID: 11261323.
- (2 patients with sinusoidal obstruction syndrome [SOS] after an initial dose of gemtuzumab ozogamicin; a 50 year old man with refractory AML developed jaundice 2 weeks after a single infusion [bilirubin 27 mg/dL], with hepatomegaly and ascites dying 2 weeks later; and, a 45 year old woman with refractory AML developed jaundice 8 days after initial infusion [bilirubin 32 mg/dL], with ascites, renal failure and death 4 weeks later).
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- (Review of the preclinical and clinical trials of gemtuzumab ozogamicin for refractory AML that formed the basis of its accelerated approval by the FDA, mentions that 45 of 142 patients developed severe liver test abnormalities, 12 of whom had elevations in both bilirubin and ALT).
- Giles FJ, Kantarjian HM, Kornblau SM, Thomas DA, Garcia-Manero G, Waddelow TA, David CL, et al. Mylotarg (gemtuzumab ozogamicin) therapy is associated with hepatic venoocclusive disease in patients who have not received stem cell transplantation. Cancer 2001; 92: 406-13. PubMed PMID: 11466696.
- (Among 119 patients with AML treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin, 14 [12%] developed SOS with abrupt onset of weight gain, abdominal distension and pain [bilirubin 2.2-33.6 mg/dL, peak ALT 43-1789 U/L], being a major cause of death in 5, and probably contributory in 3 and possibly in 4 more patients).

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Tack DK, Letendre L, Kamath PS, Tefferi A. Development of hepatic veno-occlusive disease after Mylotarg infusion for relapsed acute myeloid leukemia. Bone Marrow Transplant 2001; 28: 895-7. PubMed PMID: 11781652.

- (67 year old woman with refractory AML after hematopoietic cell transplanation [HCT] developed SOS arising 6 days after intravenous gemtuzumab ozogamicin, with ascites and jaundice [peak bilirubin 15.8 mg/dL]).
- Gordon LI. Gemtuzumab Ozogamicin (Mylotarg) and hepatic veno-occlusive disease: take two acetaminophen, and... Bone Marrow Transplant 2001; 28: 811-2. PubMed PMID: 11781639.
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- (Among 23 patients with relapsed, refractory AML treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin, liver injury suggestive of SOS developed in 11, 7 of whom died of hepatic failure 8 to 47 days after the infusion).
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- (Review of adverse side effects of gemtuzumab ozogamicin therapy mentions mild ALT and AST [Grade 1 and 2] elevations in 26% and elevations ≥5 times ULN in 16% and clinically apparent SOS in 2-12% of patients, risk factors for this complication being HCT, concurrent cytotoxic therapies, higher and more frequent doses and underlying liver disease).
- McDonald GB. Management of hepatic sinusoidal obstruction syndrome following treatment with gemtuzumab ozogamicin (Mylotarg). Clin Lymphoma 2002; 2 Suppl 1: S35-9. PubMed PMID: 11970769.
- (Review of management of SOS).
- Giles F, Garcia-Manero G, Cortes J, Thomas D, Kantarjian H, Estey E. Ursodiol does not prevent hepatic venoocclusive disease associated with Mylotarg therapy. Haematologica 2002; 87: 1114-6. PubMed PMID: 12368170.
- (Among 85 patients with refractory AML or myelodysplastic syndromes treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin and given ursodiol starting the day before infusion and continuing for 21 days, ten [12%] developed SOS, a rate similar to that reported before use of ursodiol [Giles 2001]).
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- (69 year old man with a history of liver transplantation and AML developed rising AST and bilirubin levels 7 days and died 13 days after an infusion of gemtuzumab ozogamicin).
- Nabhan C, Rundhaugen L, Jatoi M, Riley MB, Boehlke L, Peterson LC, Tallman MS. Gemtuzumab ozogamicin (MylotargTM) is infrequently associated with sinusoidal obstructive syndrome/veno-occlusive disease. Ann Oncol 2004; 15: 1231-6. PubMed PMID: 15277263.
- (Among 47 patients with AML treated with gemtuzumab as a single agent, 23 [48%] had elevation of liver tests, but only one [2%] developed clinically apparent SOS).
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- (AML-15) of the EORTC and GIMEMA leukemia groups. Haematologica 2004; 89: 950-6. PubMed PMID: 15339678.
- (Among 57 patients with AML treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin on days 1 and 15, severe myelosuppression was universal and SOS occurred in 3, which was fatal in 2 patients).
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- (An 8 year old girl and 5 year old boy with acute leukemia developed clinical evidence of SOS after several courses of gemtuzumab ozogamicin therapy, and liver biopsies showed periportal fibrosis).
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- (277 patients with relapsed AML treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin, 28% developed ALT levels \geq 5 times ULN and 29% bilirubin levels \geq 3 times ULN and 0.9% SOS).
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- (Analysis of the FDAs Medwatch database revealed 99 reports of SOS in adult and 6 in pediatric patients treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin; review of clinical trials and observational studied found highest rates of SOS [14-40%] in patients who underwent HCT within 3 months of receiving gemtuzumab or who received concurrent chemotherapy with potentially hepatotoxic agents).
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- (Among 427 patients undergoing HCT, 88 [21%] developed SOS of whom 57 [65%] died; risk factors being allogenic HCT [33%], receipt of imatinib [52%], busulfan [39%], and ferritin above 2000 ng/mL [34%]; only one patient received gemtuzumab).
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- (Among 30 children with refractory or relapsing AML treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin, "treatment was generally well tolerated", only 19 [63%] had ALT or AST elevations which were ≥ 5 times ULN in 2 [7%], and none developed SOS).

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- (Analysis of 1931 single nucleotide variants in 225 drug metabolizing enzyme or transporter genes in 95 patients with AML undergoing chemotherapy with gemtuzumab ozogamicin combined with other agents identified several variants associated with a higher or lower risk of hepatotoxicity).
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- (Systematic review and metaanalysis of 7 controlled trials of gemtuzumab ozogamicin in 3942 patients found no increase in overall survival and a higher rate of early mortality [relative risk, RR = 1.6] and SOS [RR = 7.7]).
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- (Among 482 patients with AML treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin in multiple clinical practices, 44 [9%] developed SOS of whom 13 [3%] died of resultant multiorgan failure).
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- (Among 30 patients with high risk myelodysplastic syndromes or AML treated with idarubicin, cytarabine and gemtuzumab ozogamicin [one dose, 5 mg/m^2], ALT elevations above 5 times ULN arose in 16 [53%] and one patient had nonfatal SOS).
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- (Among 146 adults with AML who received gemtuzumab ozogamicin and underwent HCT, 11 [8%] developed SOS which was fatal in 3 [2%]).