

The changes of glucose metabolism in the brain before and after antiviral therapy in patients with chronic hepatitis C and cirrhosis

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Abstract

Recently, antiviral therapy such as Interferon and Ribavirin combination is one of the most important treatment of chronic hepatitis C patients and widely used all over the world. However, adverse effects of this therapy that Depression or neuropsychiatric symptoms might make it difficult to complete. The aim of this study is to evaluate neuropsychiatric symptoms associated with antiviral therapy and its correlation of effects on cerebral glucose metabolism(CMRglu) in chronic hepatitis C patients.

12 patients with HCV infection including 11 chronic hepatitis or 1 cirrhosis patients undergoing antiviral therapy (interferon α or interferon α -2b or Peg-interferon α -2b with Ribavirin or interferon β with Ribavirin)were prospectively evaluated neuropsychiatric symptoms by neuropsychiatric test such as Digit symbol test(DST) and Block design test(BDT) ,and Self-rating Depression Scale(SDS). And We assessed cerebral glucose metabolism(CMRglu)using [18F]deoxyglucose positron emission tomography (FDG-PET) before and at the 8th week of treatment and at 3months after the treatment.

Comparing before and at 8th week of treatment, SDS points of all patients were worsened. Viral load of HCV of all patients were decreased. Digit symbol test of three patients were improved. DST of two patients were unchanged. DST of five patients were worsened. Block design test of four patients were improved. BDT of six patients were worsened.(n=10) CMRglu of six patients were 1-24% decreased in whole of the brain region including Frontal lobe, Occipital lobe, Temporal lobe, Parietal lobe, Cerebellum and Basal ganglia. CMRglu of five patients were 2-37%increased in the most of all brain regions .(n=11)

We also examined seven patients at 3 months after the treatment.(n=7) Comparing before and after the treatment, SDS points of all patients were recovered within normal range. Viral load of HCV of two patients were below analytical sensitivity(SVR) . Viral load of HCV of five patients were unchanged(NR).

DST of five patients were improved. DST of one patient was worsened. BDT of two patients were improved. BDT of four patients were worsened.(n=6) CMRglu six patients were recovered and increased 11-73%from before the treatment. CMRglu of one patient were unchanged after the therapy.

These results suggest that antiviral therapy affects on cerebral glucose metabolism and Depression

or neuropsychiatric symptoms and its abnormalities in chronic hepatitis C patients. This depression or neuropsychiatric symptoms should be reversible. We believe that Cerebral glucose metabolism is affected by antiviral therapy and that might be reversible and associated with depression or neuropsychiatric symptoms.

This study is undergoing and needed more further study to evaluate these effects before and after antiviral study.

We try to confirm this important new findings, and make good use of antiviral therapy of chronic hepatitis C patients.