

Bubnova M. G., Aronov D. M.

National Medical Research Center for Therapy and Preventive Medicine, Moscow, Russia

EFFICACY OF TRIMETAZIDINE – AN INHIBITOR OF FREE FATTY ACIDS OXIDATION IN THE TREATMENT OF PATIENTS WITH STABLE ANGINA PECTORIS AND HEART FAILURE

Aim To evaluate efficacy of modified-release trimetazidine (TMZ) included into the standard therapy for

patients with stable angina and chronic heart failure (CHF) as a part of a subgroup analysis in the

PERSPECTIVE study.

Material and methods The study included 806 patients: group 1 (n=691), patients receiving a standard therapy and modified-

release TMZ (TMZ group); and group 2 (n=115), patients receiving a standard therapy (control

group). Total duration of the study was 12 months.

Results In the TMZ group, the weekly number of angina attacks decreased by 41.9% (p<0.0001)

in 2 months and by 69.6% (from baseline, p<0.0001) in 12 months, and the frequency of nitroglycerine dosing decreased by 40.8% (p<0.0001) and 67.7% (p<0.0001), respectively. In the control group, the respective values did not change. In the TMZ group compared to the control group, the QT interval was shorter (7.9%; p<0.05), the left ventricular (LV) end-systolic dimension was reduced (13.4%; p<0.01), interventricular septal thickness and LV posterior wall thickness were decreased (9.5%; p<0.01 and 12.2%; p<0.01, respectively), and the ejection fraction was increased (11.4; p<0.05). Following the TMZ treatment, the leukocyte count in peripheral blood was decreased (5.3%; p<0.01) and the serum concentration of high-sensitivity C-reactive protein was decreased (30.7%; p<0.01) vs. increases of these indexes in the control group (17.9%; p<0.05 and 17.8%; p<0.05, respectively). The proportion of patients hospitalized for exacerbation of CHF or angina for 12 months was 8.6% in the TMZ group and 15.7% in the

control group (p=0,001).

Conclusion In patients with stable angina and CHF, inclusion of modified-release TMZ into the standard therapy

decreases the number of angina attacks, reduces the activity of inflammatory factors, and improves the

course of disease.

Keywords Ischemic heart disease; angina; chronic heart failure; trimetazidine

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Corresponding author Bubnova M. G. E-mail: mbubnova@gnicpm.ru

The 2-3% overall incidence of heart failure (HF) increases with age to 3-4% in patients of 45 years and older and up to 10% in patients over the age of 70 years [1-3]. Coronary artery disease (CAD) is a major cause of HF.

Myocardial hypertrophy, necrosis, apoptosis, autophagy, fibrosis associated with hemodynamic, neurohumoral, and inflammatory processes in cardiomyocytes, endothelium, vascular smooth muscle cells, interstitial cells, and matrix are essential pathogenetic factors in the development of HF [4, 5]. Such negative structural changes in the heart result in myocardial metabolic dysfunction and systemic metabolic dysregulation [6]. According to current perceptions, optimization of metabolic substrates

in cardiomyocytes can help improve cardiac function to reduce the progression of HF [7].

In the European and Russian guidelines, a selective inhibitor of fatty acid (FA) beta-oxidation trimetazidine is recommended for the administration in the complex treatment of patients with chronic heart failure (CHF) and chronic coronary syndrome (CAD) with attacks of angina [8–11]. Clinical trials show that trimetazidine reduces symptoms of angina and CHF to improve the quality of life of patients, especially when administered over several years [12, 13].

The results of pivotal trials showed the cardioprotective effect of trimetazidine by modulating metabolism and reducing the potency of apoptosis and autophagy, as well



as inhibiting fibrosis and aseptic inflammation in the myocardium [14, 15].

Objective

To evaluate the efficacy of the selective inhibitor of FA beta-oxidation trimetazidine modified-release in the standard treatment of patients with stable angina and CHF in the outpatient primary care setting. To evaluate the efficacy of the selective inhibitor of FA beta-oxidation trimetazidine modified-release in the standard treatment of patients with stable angina and CHF in the outpatient primary care setting.

Material and Methods

The PERSPECTIVE (Perspectives of anti-anginal therapy in Russia. Preductal® MR in the complex secondary prevention in patients with CHD and comorbidities) trial studied the efficacy of the FA beta-oxidation inhibitor trimetazidine modified-release in patients with stable angina [16]. The open-label, multicenter, randomized, controlled, parallel design involved involved patients enrolled from 40 Russian sites. The study was carried out following the Good Clinical Practice and the Declaration of Helsinki. The protocol was approved by the local ethics committee.

The study included male and female patients of the age from 30 to 65 years who had one or more of the following: CHD; history of myocardial infarction or relevant coronographic findings; having undergone coronary artery bypass surgery and/or percutaneous coronary intervention; positive stress test results typical of myocardial ischemia; stable angina functional class (FC) II–III according to the classification of the Canadian Cardiovascular Society (CCS). At the same time, patients could have comorbidities: CHF FC >I according to the New York Heart Association (NYHA), subcompensation diabetes mellitus type 2, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. All patients signed informed consent to be included in the study.

Patients with the following conditions were excluded: angina FC IV; less than a three-month history of unstable angina; myocardial infarction; heart and vessel surgery; transient ischemic attack or stroke; CHF FC (NYHA) IV; severe diabetes mellitus type 2; persistent increase in systolic blood pressure (SBP) >180 mmHg or diastolic blood pressure (DBP) >110 mmHg, including during antihypertensive therapy; hypersensitivity to trimetazidine or the administration of trimetazidine within a month prior to the inclusion; and pregnant or lactating women.

In the PERSPECTIVE study, an additional analysis was performed to evaluate the clinical efficacy of trimetazidine modified-release in the groups of patients

with stable angina and concomitant CHF. The total study population was divided into two groups:

- Group 1 (treatment group) included 691 patients with stable angina and CHF, who received trimetazidine modified-release additionally to the standard therapy (trimetazidine group);
- Group 2 (control group) included 115 patients with stable angina and CHF who received the standard therapy.

During the study, patients were allowed to take other anti-ischemic drugs or other cardiovascular treatments other than trimetazidine, as well as treatments for their comorbidities.

The planned examination included taking history, calculating body mass index (BMI), measuring office blood pressure (BP) and heart rate (HR), as well as recording a conventional electrocardiogram (ECG) and echocardiography. Structural left ventricular (LV) changes were evaluated in the B- and M-modes, and the left atrial dimension, LV end-systolic dimension (LVESD) and end-diastolic dimension (LVEDD), interventricular septal thickness (IVST) and LV posterior wall thickness (LVPWT), LV ejection fraction (LVEF; Simpson) were determined. LV mass was calculated using the following formula. 10.4 [(LVEDD + IVST + LVPWT) 3 – LVEDD3] – 13.6 [17]. LV mass index (LVMI) was calculated as the ratio of LV mass to body surface area using the Dubois formula.

The laboratory tests included total cholesterol (TC), triglycerides (TG), high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C) and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) calculated using the Friedewald formula; total blood count and biochemical blood tests (alanine transaminase (ALT), aspartate transaminase (AST), glucose and high-sensitivity C-reactive protein (hs-CRP).

The efficacy and tolerability of treatment were assessed by physicians and patients as «excellent», «good», «satisfactory» and «bad». Patients kept a diary of angina attacks and nitroglycerin doses. The study assessed cardiovascular events: cardiovascular death, non-fatal myocardial infarction and/or stroke, need for revascularization, hospitalization due to exacerbation of angina or CHF.

Patients of both groups visited physicians in 2, 6, and 12 months. The mean treatment and follow-up period was 12 months.

The data obtained were processed using the SAS suite (Statistical Analysis Systems, USA). The results were expressed as the means (M) and standard deviation (σ). Both standard methods of descriptive statistics (calculation of means, standard deviations, quintiles and rank statistics, etc.) and the criteria of significance (chi-square,



BMI, $kg/m^2 (M \pm \sigma)$

SBP, mm Hg $(M\pm\sigma)$

DBP, mm Hg $(M\pm\sigma)$

HR, bpm $(M\pm\sigma)$

LVEF, % (M±σ)

Table 1. Characteristics of the examined patients with stable angina and CHF*

Parameter	Trime- tazidine (n=691)	Control group (n=115)	
Age, years (M±σ)	56.9±0.3	57.1±0.5	
Male, n (%)	416 (60.2)	71 (61.7)	
Arterial hypertension, n (%)	567 (82.1)	97 (84.3)	
History of myocardial infarction, n (%)	691 (100)	115 (100)	
CHF FC (NYHA), n (%): • II • III	563 (81,5) 128 (18,5)	72 (83,5) 19 (16,5)	
Number of angina attacks per week $(M\pm\sigma)$	7.9±0.3	7.2±0.5	
Nitroglycerin doses per week (M±σ)	7.8±0.3	7.5±0.7	

29.1±0.2

135.5±0.6 87.9±1.3

73.5±0.4

45.2±1.5

29.3±0.4

138.3±1.5

88.6±0.8

73.4±0.9

44.3±1.1

Group

Student's t-test, Fischer's exact test) were used. The differences were considered statistically significant at p<0.05.

Results

General clinical characteristics of patients

Among patients with stable angina and symptoms of CHF, 50% were male, 39.8% were in the trimetazidine group, while 38.3% of patients in the control group were

Table 2. Treatment of patients with stable angina and CHF

	Group			
Indicator, n (%)	Trime- tazidine (n=691)	Control group (n=115)		
Beta-blockers	590 (85.4)	94 (81.7)		
RAAS inhibitors	622 (90)	115 (100)		
Acetylsalicylic acid	549 (79.5)	87 (75.7)		
Statins	493 (71.3)	83 (72.2)		
Long-acting nitrates	519 (75.1)	82 (71.3)		
Calcium antagonists	245 (35.5)	35 (30.4)		
Diuretics	499 (72.2)	79 (68.7)		
Digoxin	20 (2.9)	2 (1.7)		

CHF – chronic heart failure;

RAAS – renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system.

female. Patients of the two groups did not differ in terms of basic characteristics: age, obesity, BP, and HR (Table 1).

All patients with signs of CHF had a history of myocardial infarction. Most patients had arterial hypertension. Despite the relevant treatment, mean levels of SBP and DBP exceeded the optimal values (120–130/70–79 mmHg) recommended for patients at very high risk of developing cardiovascular events [18]. Patients with stable angina of both groups took antiplatelet drugs, renin-angiotensinaldosterone system (RAAS) inhibitors, beta-blockers, longacting nitrates, calcium channel blockers, and diuretics as the standard therapy (there were no significant differences between the groups, Table 2).

Patients had many angina attacks per week at baseline (see Table 1). Despite HR-slowing therapy with beta-blockers and digoxin, Mean HR was higher than the target levels recommended for stable angina in the majority of patients.

Anti-anginal effects of trimetazidine

The addition of trimetazidine to the standard therapy in patients with stable angina and CHF resulted in a significant reduction in the number of angina attacks per week in 2 months (by 41.9%; p<0.0001), while the anti-anginal effect increased by month 6 (up to 63.3%) of the baseline; p<0.0001) and month 12 (up to 69.6% of the baseline; p<0.0001; Figure 1, A). This favorable effect clearly confirms the importance of the long-term administration of trimetazidine in patients with angina attacks. This effect was accompanied with a decrease in the number of nitroglycerin tablets per week: by 40.8% (p<0.0001) by month 2, by 63.3% (from the baseline; p<0.0001) by month 6 and by 67.7% by month 12 (from the baseline; p<0.0001; Figure 1, B). The number of angina attacks and nitroglycerin tablets taken per week did not change in the control group within the 12 months.

The baseline mean angina FC in the trimetazidine group was 2.33 ± 0.02 ; this decreased to 1.99 ± 0.03 after 12 months (p<0.0001). Thus, the course of angina improved. Angina FC did not change in the control group (2.34 ± 0.05).

Risk factors, ECG, and echocardiographic parameters

BMI was assessed at all visits, remaining stable in both groups. The BP levels decreased slightly in the two groups by month 12: SBP by 2.4% (p<0.0001) and DBP by 7.7% (p<0.0001) in the trimetazidine group, and SBP by 1.1% (p<0.0001) and DBP by 5.5% (p<0.0001) in the control group; there were no significant differences between the groups.

While HR levels decreased by 5.9% (p<0.0001) in the trimetazidine group, they did not change in the control group by month 12. A significant QT shortening from

^{*} intergroup differences of all indicators are statistically insignificant. CHF – chronic heart failure; FC – functional class; BMI – body mass index; DBP – diastolic blood pressure; SBP – systolic blood pressure; LVFV – left ventricular ejection fraction; CHF – chronic heart failure; HR – heart rate.



 0.38 ± 0.01 to 0.35 ± 0.01 sec (7.9%; p<0.05) was detected in the trimetazidine group.

The analyzed echocardiographic parameters did not differ significantly between the groups at baseline. The left atrial dimensions remained stable in both groups of patients with stable angina and CHF by month 12. A significant decrease LV IVST from 1.21 ± 0.02 to 1.14 ± 0.01 cm (p<0.05) and LVPWT from 1.14 ± 0.01 to 1.08 ± 0.01 cm was detected in the trimetazidine group (p<0.01). These indicators did not change in the control group during the follow-up period. LVESD significantly decreased by 9.9% (from 4.23 ± 0.27 to 3.82 ± 0.34 cm; p<0.05) in the trimetazidine group and increased by 3.6% (from 4.26 ± 0.11 to 4.41 ± 0.09 cm; p<0.05) in the control group. LVMI decreased mildly from 136.8 ± 5.7 to 132.4 ± 9.8 g/m² (by 3.2%; p<0.01) in the trimetazidine group.

LVEF was equally moderately low in both patient groups (see Table 1), but increased significantly by 4.2% (p<0.05) by month 6 and 9.1% (p<0.05) by month 12 during the use of trimetazidine and the standard therapy, which exceeded the values of this parameter in the control group by 11.4% by month 12 (p<0.05; Figure 2). LVEF did not change in the control group.

Biochemistry

The administration of trimetazidine was associated with a significant decrease in the levels of TC (by 11.3%; p<0.001), TGs (by 9.8%; p<0.05) and LDL-C (by 15.1%; p<0.01) during the 12 month follow-up period (Table 3). Lipid and lipoprotein levels did not change in the control group. The blood glucose and AST levels remained stable in both groups (see Table 3). At the same time, ALT decreased reliably (by 11.6%; p<0.05) during the use of trimetazidine and did not change in the control group by month 12 (see Table 3).

The levels of hemoglobin and the red blood cell count in the peripheral blood remained stable in both groups. At the same time, the white blood cell count in the peripheral blood decreased significantly in the trimetazidine group (by 5.3%, p<0.01) and increased in the control group (by 17.9%, p<0.05). Another marker of inflammation hs-CRP also decreased in the trimetazidine group (by 30.7%; p<0.01) but increased in the control group (by 17.8%; p<0.05; see Table 3). The decrease in the white blood cell count and hs-CRP levels can be considered as an anti-inflammatory effect of trimetazidine.

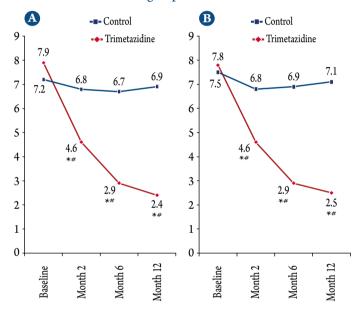
Clinical status and treatment tolerability

In 12 months, the treatment received in the trimetazidine group was assessed as «excellent» by 42.1% of physicians and

38.7% of patients, «good» by 50.6% and 53.4%, «satisfactory» by 7.3% and 7.9%, and «bad» by 0% and 0.4%, respectively. The treatment received in the control group was assessed as «excellent» by 8.5% of physicians and 11% of patients, «good» by 57.8% and 51.4%, «satisfactory» by 30.5% and 33.2%, and «bad» by 1.2% and 4.4%, respectively.

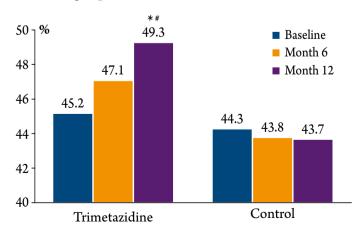
There were no fatalities in either group during the follow-up. At the same time, 8.6% of patients in the trimetazidine group and 15.7% of patients in the control group (p=0.001) were admitted to hospital due to worsening of the state associated with exacerbation of the cardiovascular disease (CHF or angina), i.e., the number of hospitalizations was 1.8 times less

Figure 1. Number of angina attacks (A) and nitroglycerin tablets (B) per week in the trimetazidine and control groups within 12 months



^{*} p<0.001 when compared to the baseline value; # p<0.001 when compared between the groups.

Figure 2. Changes in LVEF in the trimetazidine and control groups within 12 months



^{*} p<0.05 when compared to the baseline value; # p<0.05 when compared between the groups. LVEF – left ventricular ejection fraction.



Table 3. Changes in lipid levels, biochemical parameters and peripheral blood indicators in patients with stable angina and CHF

Indicator (M±σ)	Trimetazidine group		Control group			
	baseline	12 months	p	baseline	12 months	p
TC, mmol/L	5.75±0.05	5.10±0.04	< 0.001	5.73±0.11	5.61±0.12	ns
TG, mmol/L	1.93±0.05	1.74±0.06	< 0.05	1.95±0.13	1.87±0.11	ns
LDL-C, mmol/L	3.64±0.08	3.09±0.08	< 0.01	3.63±0.18	3.61±0.17	ns
HDL-C, mmol/L	1.20±0.02	1.21±0.03	ns	1.21±0.06	1.15±0.04	ns
Glucose, mmol/L	5.73±0.06	5.44±0.04	ns	5.29±0.10	5.30±0.12	ns
AST, U/L	29.15±0.72	26.93±0.80	ns	28.14±1.76	28.65±1.07	ns
ALT, U/L	31.27±0.75	27.65±0.62	< 0.05	30.60±1.97	31.35±2.03	ns
hs-CRP, mg/L	4.22±0.05	2.92±0.02	< 0.01	4.20±0.17	5.55±1.16	<0.05
WBCs, 109/L	6.41±0.07	6.07±0.07	< 0.01	6.04±0.15	7.12±0.10	<0.05

CHF - chronic heart failure; TC - total cholesterol; TG - triglyceride; LDL-C - low-density lipoprotein cholesterol;

HDL-C - high-density lipoprotein cholesterol; AST - aspartate transaminase; ALT - alanine transaminase;

hs-CRP - high sensitivity C-reactive protein; ns - nonsignificant.

in patients receiving trimetazidine in addition to the standard therapy.

Discussion

The blood plasma levels of long-chain FAs, which significantly increase in CHF, freely enter into the cell cytoplasm and mitochondria. Acetyl-CoA formed abundantly under such conditions reduces the activity of pyruvate dehydrogenase and the rate of aerobic oxidation of glucose. As a result, pyruvate (carboxylate anion of pyruvic acid) cannot be actively used by mitochondria for oxidation and will be converted into lactate (lactic acid anion). The accumulation of lactate and H +ions in the cells causes intracellular metabolic acidosis, which changes the permeability of cell membranes with adverse effects on cardiomyocytes, including decreased ability to resist damage [19].

Previous studies in patients with CHF showed an increase in the blood levels of lactic acid at rest and its strict correlation with a more severe course of the disease and a worse prognosis [20–23]. All types of energy depos are rapidly emptied in HF, and changes occur in the creatine kinase system, which is an important energy buffer. The activity of mitochondrial creatine kinase and myofibril creatine kinase down to 20% and 50% of normal activity, respectively. The amount of creatine phosphate decreases by 30% at the early stage of HF and by 70% as HF progresses [7]. This results in a decrease in the production of adenosine triphosphate (ATP) (by 30–40% according to trial findings) and the energy transport inside the cell.

Anaerobic glycolysis, which becomes more important in HF, does not effectively support energy metabolism. In ATP deficiency, the levels of Na+ increase, and Na+/Ca2+ exchanger is activated, which causes an electrolyte imbalance, i.e., cells become overloaded with Ca2+ ions with K+ deficiency. Electrophysiological processes are consequently

disrupted, the relaxation phase during diastole is hampered, the contractile function and myocardial inotropic reserve are reduced, which manifests as shortness of breath with physical exertion [24, 25].

Metabolic disorders are associated with myocardial membrane damages, activation of apoptosis, and necrosis of cardiomyocytes, which contribute to the development and progression of HF. Energy consumption and free FAs oxidation rate are inversely correlated with LVEF and directly correlated with the blood levels of growth hormone, adrenaline, and noradrenaline [26].

The positive effects of trimetazidine on energy metabolism in HF are due to several mechanisms:

- 1) decreased FA metabolism due to traditional inhibition of the key enzyme long-chain 3 ketoacyl-CoA-thiolase that catalyzes the last stage in the FA beta-oxidation cycle [14];
- 2) inclusion of long-chain FAs in sarcolemma lipids, which increases the synthesis of membrane phospholipids and prevents the entry of FAs in the cardiomyocyte mitochondria [14];
- 3) increased efficacy of aerobic glucose oxidation due to greater activity of pyruvate dehydrogenase [27];
- 4) suppression of excessive glycolysis and prevention of intracellular acidosis [27];
- 5) reduced accumulation of H+ ions and prevention of cell overload with Ca2+ ions [28];
- 6) possibility to increase the creatine phosphate/ATP ratio [29];
- 7) suppression of free reactive oxygen species [30].

The above mechanisms of trimetazidine contribute to the protection of cardiomyocytes from death due to necrosis or apoptosis or autophagy-dependent death, i.e., mortality due to processes considered as the basis for the LV remodeling and progressive reduction of contractile function during the development of ischemic cardiomyopathy.



Trimetazidine can also inhibit myocardial apoptosis by:

- 1) decreasing the production of active oxygen species and expression of the restored NADPH oxidase-2 [31, 32];
- 2) inhibiting the activity of the non-selective mitochondrial permeability transition pore (mPTP) [33], known as mitochondrial Ca²+-dependent pore with transient permeability, through which the water-soluble compounds are transported [34];
- 3) increasing the expression of miRNA (micro-RNA, small noncoding RNAs that play an important role in the regulation of the normal biological function of the myocardium) and inhibiting PTEN (phosphatase and tensin homolog) activity [35], which activates signal transmission via the PI3K/AKT/mTOR signaling pathway comprising the major regulator of cell survival, leading to a decrease in the ratio of proteins of mitochondrial pathway of Bax/Bcl-2 apoptosis activation and the expression of caspase-3 (activator of receptor and mitochondrial apoptosis at the final stage) [36, 37].

Apoptosis interacts with autophagy, which is a conservative mechanism of protein and organelle degradation through various complexes (Beclin-1, Bcl-2/Bcl-xl, mTOR, TNF-α, p53 pathway, etc.) [38]. Moderate autophagy is known to help cardiomyocytes survive and maintain normal heart function, unlike the pronounced activation of autophagy that intensifies negative factors associated with myocardial damage, resulting in lower cardiac function and even the development of HF [31, 39]. As well as improving cardiac function, Trimetazidine reduces ischemic perfusion damage of the myocardium through the modulation of cardiomyocyte autophagy by decreasing the number of autophagosomes and the expression of proteins associated with autophagy and by influencing the activity of AMPK (5' AMP-activated protein kinase) [15, 31, 40].

Randomized clinical trials (RCTs) confirmed the protective effect of trimetazidine in CHF in terms of its ability to improve clinical symptoms and function of the heart [13, 41, 42]. Gao et al. [43] showed in their meta-analysis (17 RCTs, 955 patients with CHF) that trimetazidine unlike placebo increased LVEF by 7.49% (95% confidence interval (CI) 6.26–8.71; p<0.01) and decreased LV end-systolic volume by 10.37 mL (p<0.01). After excluding the RCTs with trimetazidine therapy of <3 months, the result was even better: LVEF increased by 8.12% (95% CI 6.68–9.55; p<0.01). The elevation of LVEF was most pronounced in patients with CHF FC (NYHA) IV – by 10.87% (95% CI 9.39–12.35; p<0.01). The subgroup analysis showed that LVEF increased by 7.37% after taking trimetazidine in ischemic CHF (95% CI 6.05–8.70; p<0.01).

However, LVEF rarely improves significantly within a short period (≤6 months). According to the RCT findings, heart function improves more significantly with long-term

administration of trimetazidine [13, 44]. Fragasso et al. [45] demonstrated in their RCT that treatment with trimetazidine in CHF patients with LVEF <45% for 13 months was associated with a marked increase in LVEF (up to $43\pm10\%$) versus placebo ($34\pm7\%$). The meta-analysis by Zhang et al. [46] (16 RCTs and 884 patients with CHF) confirmed the capability of trimetazidine to increase LVEF (by 6.46%; p<0.0001), as well as reducing LVESD (by 6.67 mm; p<0.0001) and LVEDD (by 6.05 mm; p<0.0001). These data are consistent with our findings.

Myocardial fibrosis is an important factor of pathological changes in CHF, including the reduction of myocardial contractile function, the development of arrhythmia attributable to the effects of secreted paracrine factors on the sinoatrial node, and the intensification of hypoxic symptoms of HF due to reduced oxygen delivery [47–49]. Experimental data confirm that the administration of trimetazidine can lead to a decrease in myocardial hypertrophy induced by adrenaline, the expression of connective tissue growth factor (CTGF), the accumulation of collagen I and III in myocardial tissues, as well as decreased production of active oxygen species capable of stimulating the growth of smooth muscle cells and collagen deposition [50-52]. The RCTs showed the ability of trimetazidine to reduce the risk of arrhythmia in patients with a history of myocardial infarction [53] and having CHF [44, 54].

Trimetazidine used additionally to the best-possible therapy may reduce the likelihood of arrhythmia by increasing heart rate variability and reducing the QT interval [55-57]. Zemljic et al. [56] showed that QTc decreased (by 8.8%; p=0.0002) in patients with ischemic CHF and LVEF<55% after taking trimetazidine for 1 month compared to the control group (QTc unchanged; p=0.74). A noticeable shortening of QTc interval was observed in patients with initially long (>440 ms) interval compared to patients with normal interval (by -45±38 ms versus -19±19 ms; p=0.04). In our study, a significant decrease in the QTc interval was also observed in patients with CHF during trimetazidine therapy. Here, it should be noted that this effect was recorded only during long-term (at least 12 months) administration of trimetazidine. Such electrophysiological effects of trimetazidine can be the result of ATP-dependent mechanism's positive effects on structural myocardial remodeling and cardiac fibrosis. This appears to be an important indirect criterion for the efficacy of trimetazidine. The meta-analysis by Zhang et al. (16 RCTs, 884 patients with CHF) showed the possibility of decreasing HR during the administration of trimetazidine compared to the control group (weighted mean difference 2.62 bpm; p=0.04) [46], which is consistent with our findings.

Numerous trials demonstrate anti-anginal and antiischemic effects of trimetazidine confirmed by stress tests



Краткая информация по безопасности – амлодипин/индапамид/периндоприл MU-31762-67622

осущения в принименскам 5 ммг/1,25 ммг/5 ммг замодиним (1.25 ммг замодиним 2.5 ммг

то питерация и установания и учити поченой недрестаточности образования в дележной странций и учити поченой недрестаточности образования до питераций и учити поченой недрестаточности, образования до питераций и учити поченой недрестаточности, образования до питераций и поченой недрестаточности, образования до питераций и стощенными допутком учити поченом до питераций и питераций и странций и поченом до питераций и питер





[58, 59]. Based on the meta-analysis of 23 RCTs (n=1378), the incidence of angina attacks (1.44%, 95% CI 2.10–0.79; p<0.0001) and the need for nitroglycerin (1.47%, 95% CI 0.73–2.20, p<0.0001) were significantly lower during the administration trimetazidine compared to placebo and other anti-anginal agents, the duration of stress test until a 1 mm ST-segment decrease achieved increased (by 0.32 min; 95% CI 0.15–0.48; p=0.0002) [60]. In our study, the addition of trimetazidine to the standard therapy in patients with CHF and stable angina reduced the number of angina attacks per week (by 41.9%) as soon as 2 months, while the antianginal effect increased by month 12 (up to 69.6%). Similar positive changes were observed during the administration of nitroglycerin.

The protective effect of trimetazidine in ischemic CHF such as the improved LV function and remodeling processes is also due to indirect effects on other tissues and organs and a simultaneous reduction of inflammatory response in plasma, levels of natriuretic peptides and cardiospecific troponins [45, 61, 62], restoration of artery endothelial relaxation by increasing the bioavailability of nitrogen oxide, as well as reducing oxidative stress and endothelin-1 levels [30]. Trimetazidine was shown to reduce and prevent:

- 1) damage to skeletal muscles caused by statins, for example, and restore their functional activity [63];
- 2) damage to lung function caused by high-altitude hypoxia [64];
- 3) damage to kidneys caused by ischemia/reperfusion due to the reduced expression of factors associated with nuclear factor-erythroid-2 related factor 2 [65].

Experimental [66] and clinical trials demonstrated potential anti-inflammatory effects of trimetazidine [61, 67]. An experiment on rabbits showed a three-fold decrease in the penetration rate of neutrophil granulocytes in the myocardium after acute ischemia/reperfusion during the introduction of trimetazidine [68]. Meta-analysis by Zhou and Chen [69] showed the levels of hs-CRP decreased during the use of trimetazidine versus control (by 1.86 mg/L; 95% CI 2.81-0.90; p<0.01). Levels of hs-CRP decreased (by 38%) in patients with diabetes mellitus type 2 and ischemic cardiomyopathy as soon as after 3 months of administering trimetazidine [70]. We observed a 30.7% reduction in the hs-CRP levels following 12 months of trimetazidine therapy (versus elevation in the control group) and a decrease in the WBC count in the peripheral blood. This can obviously be considered as a manifestation of the anti-inflammatory effect of trimetazidine in patients with stable angina and CHF in which inflammation processes are activated, while the immune activity is correlated with the severity of the disease and prognosis. WBCs are the source of leukotrienes, comprising a factor of platelet, protease, and oxidant aggregation. The anti-inflammatory potential of

trimetazidine is important in preventing the instability of atheromas [66].

In our study, the 12-month administration of trimetazidine in addition to the standard treatment improved the clinical state of patients by reducing (by 45.2%; p=0.001) the number of hospitalizations due to exacerbation of cardiovascular disease (angina or CHF). The rate of hospitalizations decreased after 48 months of trimetazidine therapy (versus placebo) by 47% (p=0.002) in the study by Di Napoli et al. [71] and by 57% (p=0.003) in the meta-analysis by Zhang et al. [46]. The meta-analysis by Gao et al. [43] showed that the risk of cardiovascular events in combination with hospitalization decreased during trimetazidine therapy (versus placebo) by 58% (p<0.00001).

In our study, as consistent with other trials, the tolerability of trimetazidine within the standard therapy was good in patients with CHF and stable angina [72, 73]. The results of the recently published ATPCI RCT (n=6,007) with the follow-up period for 47.5 months showed good tolerability of trimetazidine compared to placebo and equal incidence of neurological symptoms (7.7% vs. 7.0%), including parkinsonism syndrome (0.3% vs. 0.2%), Parkinson's disease (0.3% vs. 0.2%) and drug-induced parkinsonism (<0.1% vs. 0) [74]. This proves the absence of a relation link between the use of trimetazidine and the risk of neurological symptoms. There are no statistically significant differences between the groups in the incidence of thrombocytopenia, agranulocytosis, hepatic disorders, which confirms the good tolerability of trimetazidine during continuous long-term administration.

Conclusion

Trimetazidine demonstrated its efficacy in the treatment of patients with chronic heart failure of ischemic origin. It was shown that trimetazidine can maintain effective energy metabolism of cardiomyocytes, improve endothelium function and reduce inflammation. Experimental studies demonstrated the protective effects of trimetazidine, such as the antifibrotic effect. In our study, adding trimetazidine to the standard therapy in patients with chronic heart failure and angina was associated with a significant improvement in the electrophysiological activity and structural and functional parameters of the heart, a decrease in the levels of atherogenic lipids comprising a marker of inflammation in white blood cells and high sensitivity C-reactive protein, a reduced number of angina attacks, and an improved clinical state of patients. Thus, trimetazidine therapy can be considered as an effective strategy for managing patients with chronic heart failure and angina in real-world clinical practice.

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