

European Society of Cardiology XXII Annual Congress (ESC)

Calcium Channel Blockers Reduce Cardiovascular Risk in Hypertension, a WHO / ISH Analysis Says

Amsterdam – Following the release of the results of a meta-analysis by Dr. Curt Furberg presented on August 29, 2000 at the meeting of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) in Amsterdam, Bayer issues the following statement:

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Society of Hypertension (ISH) presented results of a meta-analysis showing that Calcium Channel Blockers (CCBs) reduce the risk of cerebro- and cardiovascular complications. CCBs, ACEIs and diuretics / beta-blockers showed similar benefits.

This conclusion is based on more than 75,000 patients from well designed studies with more than 6,000 cerebro- and cardiovascular events. They were presented by study coordinator Dr. Stephen MacMahon on August 24, 2000 at the ISH meeting in Chicago.

This analysis, the largest evaluation of anti-hypertensive drug trials ever undertaken to date, confirms the results of the recently published INSIGHT trial (International Nifedipine GITS Study: Intervention as a Goal of Hypertension Treatment, Brown et al., The Lancet 2000;356:366-372). INSIGHT demonstrated that the use of the long acting CCB nifedipine GITS (Gastro-Intestinal Therapeutic System) is associated with a cardio- and cerebrovascular risk reduction of approximately 50%.

The results of this large, well conducted WHO meta-analysis are in direct contrast to the results presented by Dr. Furberg at the ESC meeting, which were faulted for the studies included and for inherent problems with published data.

In conclusion, double-blind, randomized clinical trials like INSIGHT and SYST-EUR as well as the WHO / ISH state-of-the-art meta analysis have established the reduction of cardio- and cerebrovascular morbidity and mortality by long-acting CCBs. Bayer concurs with the view of WHO that the data available clearly demonstrate the benefits of newer antihypertensive drugs, such as long-acting CCBs.

Leverkusen, August 30, 2000