

Short- and long-term effect of interferon therapy for chronic hepatitis C

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Abstract

AIM: To study the short and long-term effect of interferon therapy for chronic hepatitis C.

METHODS: Sixty-eight patients with chronic hepatitis C were treated with interferon (3×10^6 IU, im/2 d, for a course of three months) with 1 to 5 courses of treatment and followed for 1.5 to 3 years after the therapy.

RESULTS: According to antiviral effect of interferon, 76.5% (52/68)

of the cases had a complete response by the end of the first therapy course, while 20.6% (14/68) and 2.9% (2/68) had a partial response or non-response. Over a half of the patients with a complete response (27/52, 51.9%) relapsed within 6 to 10 mo after the first course. Of the original cohort, nineteen patients received two courses of therapy, while one patient received three and another three received five courses of therapy. The follow-up for these patients was between 1.5 to 3 years, at which time 29 (42.7%) of the patients sustained a complete response, with four of them having HCV RNA positive serum, while the others had either a partial (37/68, 2.9%) or non-response.

CONCLUSION: Interferon therapy had a high short-term complete response but a low long-term complete response in the treatment of chronic hepatitis C.

Key words: Hepatitis C/therapy; Interferons/therapeutic use

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