

CASE STUDY

Clopidogrel Responsiveness in Patients Undergoing Percutaneous Coronary Intervention using Multiplate Analyzer: Frequency and Outcomes

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Received: 30th May, 2023; Revised: 16th July, 2023; Accepted: 14th August, 2023; Available Online: 25th September, 2023

ABSTRACT

Objectives: Over and under response to dual antiplatelet therapy (DAPT) can lead to bleeding and thrombotic events in patients undergoing coronary stent placement. The present study aimed to assess the platelet response to clopidogrel in patient undergoing percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) using Multiplate Analyzer. The primary outcome in the present study was the short-term incidence of stent thrombosis and bleeding events.

Background: Multiple electrode aggregometry is a rapid and standardized tool to for diagnosis of platelet defects and monitoring response to DAPT.

Methods: A hospital-based, prospective study was conducted on 431 patients who underwent PCI from September 2016 to November 2017 and received clopidogrel therapy. The platelet aggregometry was done using a Multiplate analyzer (Dynabyte, Munich, Germany). Patients were followed for 30 days to assess the incidence of stent thrombosis and bleeding.

Results: The patients' mean age was 58 ± 6.7 years. A total of 40% of the patients were diabetic and 7.7% had chronic renal failure. The rate of clopidogrel non-responders was 10.7%, while clopidogrel over-responders were 18.3%. Patients with diabetes and chronic renal failure had significantly lower platelet responsiveness (40.1% with $p < 0.05$ and 7.7% with $p < 0.005$, respectively). Smoking was significantly associated with platelet over-responsiveness (39.4%, $p < 0.001$). Patients with low platelet responsiveness to clopidogrel were associated with an increased risk of definite stent thrombosis ($p < 0.005$), while increasing bleeding risk was significantly associated with over-responsiveness to patients to clopidogrel ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusions: Antiplatelet responsiveness showing individual variability with increased risk of stent thrombosis among the cases with no response to the effect of clopidogrel and high risk of bleeding with the over-responsiveness group.

Keywords: Antiplatelet therapy, Bleeding, Clopidogrel, Platelet aggregometry, Stent thrombosis.

International Journal of Drug Delivery Technology (2023); DOI: 10.25258/ijddt.13.3.53

How to cite this article: Khadim MA, Farhan HA, Muthanna, Al-Quraishi MH. Clopidogrel Responsiveness in Patients Undergoing Percutaneous Coronary Intervention using Multiplate Analyzer: Frequency and Outcomes. International Journal of Drug Delivery Technology. 2023;13(3):1112-1116.

Source of support: Nil.

Conflict of interest: None

INTRODUCTION

Globally, diabetes and cardiovascular disease are the major causes of morbidity and mortality; in its 2013 report, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that both myocardial infarction and stroke accounted for almost 22% of global mortality in 2004, which is expected to reach 26.3% of global mortality by 2030.¹ Aspirin is the most commonly prescribed drug for secondary prevention of ischemic cardiovascular diseases following percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI). However, stent thrombosis, a life-threatening complication with grave clinical consequences, is still a major concern with an estimated incidence ranging between 1 and 5%.^{2,3} The recognition of the higher risk of stent thrombosis following

PCI led to the recommendation of the use of dual antiplatelet therapy (DAPT), a combination of aspirin and antagonists of the platelet ADP receptor P2Y₁₂.⁴ Clopidogrel is a common component of DAPT that exhibited high efficacy in prevention of stent thrombosis when administered for 12 months after PCI.⁵

Nevertheless, the current body of published literature demonstrated that poor response to DAPT, usually indicated by platelet function tests, is associated with a significant increase in the risk of stent thrombosis.^{6,7} On the other hand, over-response to clopidogrel is of clinical consequence as well; recent reports showed that enhanced response to clopidogrel carrying a higher risk for bleeding events.⁸ Evidence exists that the occurrence of bleeding during or after PCI has a similar

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impact on the patient's mortality risk as compared with the occurrence of a post PCI myocardial infarction (MI).⁹⁻¹¹

The prevalence of non-repose or over-response to clopidogrel varies substantially across the published literature. Recent findings suggest that, in 4 to 44% of patients, there is an insufficient inhibitory effect of clopidogrel on ADP-dependent platelet aggregation, which is called clopidogrel "resistance" or "non-response".¹²⁻¹⁵ The prevalence of non-responders was reported to be notably higher among patients with chronic renal failure(CRF); impaired renal function has been characterized as a major predictor for arthero-thrombotic complications, including thrombotic stent occlusions as well as bleeding events.¹⁶

PATIENTS AND METHODS

A prospective, interventional, hospital-based study was conducted from September 2016 to November 2017. The study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Iraqi Board for Medical Specializations and performed according to the ethical standards of the declaration of Helsinki.

Study Participant

The present study included consecutive patients who underwent PCI with drug-eluting stents deployments at Ibn Al-Bitar Hospital for Cardiac Surgery, Baghdad, Iraq. Patients were considered eligible for the study irrespective of the clinical presentation at the time point of the PCI. Therefore, patients with acute coronary syndrome, as well as patients with stable ischemic heart diseases were included in the study. All eligible patients were on clopidogrel (PLAVIX 75mg – SANOFI®) with full drug compliance. CRF was defined by the elevation of serum creatinine ≥ 2 mg/dl and evidence of clinical and radiological findings that suggest CRF.

We excluded patients with a history of administration of glycoprotein IIB/IIIA inhibitors in the last 10 days, thrombocytopenia, and/or contraindications to antiplatelet therapy.

All eligible patients underwent full history taking and clinical examination. The platelets' responsiveness was done using platelets aggregometry. Patients were followed for 30 days postoperatively.

Multiplate Aggregometry

The platelets aggregometry was done using Multiplate Analyzer (Dynabyte, Munich, Germany). The reference cut-off values for both tests is the last published data from Roche Company 2013:¹⁷

Over response group	<190 AU*min
Normal response group	190–460 AU*min
Non-response group	>460 AU*min

Study Endpoints

The endpoints of this study were the cumulative incidences of definite stent thrombosis and bleeding. The stent thrombosis was defined according to the Academic Research Consortium criteria,¹⁸ While the bleeding was defined in accordance with TIMI classification.¹⁹

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis was carried out using SPSS version 21. Categorical variables were presented as frequencies and percentages. Data were expressed as means \pm standard deviation (SD). ANOVA test was used to test the relationship between different parameters. Patients were divided into 3 groups according to the cut lines. A *p-value* of 0.05 or less was considered to be statistically significant. A binary regression model is used to assess covariates' independence in affecting clopidogrel antiplatelet responsiveness individually.

RESULTS

From a total of 440 patients, 431 patients were included in the present study. The remaining patients were excluded due to thrombocytopenia (No. = 2) and history of intake of glycoprotein IIB/IIIA inhibitors (No. = 7). The majority of patients were females (51.8%) with a mean age of 58 ± 6.7 years. Forty percent of the patients were diabetic and 7.7% had CRF. In addition, 170 (39.4%) patients were smokers. At the end of follow-up, 10 (2.3%) patients had stent thrombosis and 32 (7.4%) had minimal-to-minor bleeding event (Table 1). Overall, 79 (18.3%) patients were over-responders to clopidogrel and 10.7% of the patients were non-responders (Figure 1).

Regarding the relationship between platelet responsiveness tertiles and diabetes, there was a statistically significant association between the prevalence of were non-responders and diabetes (Table 2); diabetic patients were more likely to be in 3rd tertile. Similarly, CRF patients were more likely to be in the 3rd tertile of the platelet responsiveness to the effect of clopidogrel (Table 3). On the other hand, smokers were more likely to be in the 1st tertile of the platelet responsiveness to the effect of clopidogrel (Table 4).

Regarding the results of stent thrombosis, Figure 2 shows that the relation between platelets' non-responsiveness to the effect of clopidogrel and the incidence of stent thrombosis was statistically significant, with higher risk of stent thrombosis among non-responders. On the other hand, enhanced platelet responsiveness to the effect of clopidogrel was associated with an increased risk of bleeding events (Figure 3).

DISCUSSION

Frequency of Clopidogrel Non-responsiveness

The current study showed that the frequency of clopidogrel non-responsiveness was 10.7%. This finding is in agreement with a study by Yaseen IF *et al.*²⁰ It has been described that there is wide range for antiplatelet non-responsiveness worldwide,^{13,21,22}

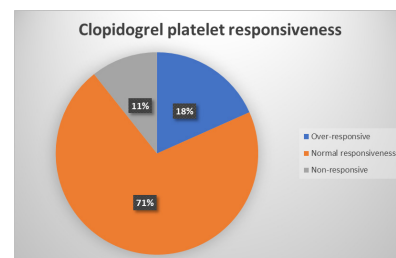


Figure 1: Distribution of clopidogrel platelets responsiveness

Table 1: Baseline patient characteristics

Type of variable		Number No.	Percentage (%)
Age		79	(18.3)
Mean ± S.D (Years)	1 st tertile	Mean (58.82) ± 6.4 S.D	
	2 nd tertile	Mean (58.59) ± 6.5 S.D	(71)
	3 rd tertile	Mean (55.95) ± 7.8 S.D	(10.7)
Gender	Male	208	(48.3)
	Female	223	(51.7)
Diabetes	Diabetic	173	(40.1)
Smoking	Smoker	170	(39.4)
Chronic Renal Failure	CRF	33	(7.7)
Stent Thrombosis	Yes	10	(2.3)
	No	421	(97.7)
Bleeding	No bleeding	399	(92.6)
	Minimal Bleeding	26	(6)
	Minor bleeding	6	(1.4)

the nature of reduced response is multifactorial and might comprise clinical, biological, pharmacological, and genetic elements,²³ and it ranged from (4–44%).¹²⁻¹⁵

Risk Factors for Abnormal Platelet Responsiveness

Multiple contributing factors affect the platelets aggregation in vitro, which might be reflected on the clinical outcome of the patients. In our study, diabetes was a significant predictive factor for clopidogrel non-responsiveness. This findings is similar to other studies conducted in Switzerland, Germany, Italy, China and France.²⁴⁻²⁸ While very few studies like a study conducted in Germany showed no statistically significant association.²⁹ The non-responsiveness was attributed to insufficient generation of the active metabolite of clopidogrel, rather than to alterations in P2Y12 receptor function; and although non-responsiveness to clopidogrel was not related to glycemic control, but appeared to be affected by a systemic inflammatory response, as reflected by increased levels of fibrinogen; or increased white blood cell count.³⁰ The impaired renal function was associated with reduced *in-vitro* responsiveness to DAPT in diabetic patients with coronary artery disease.³⁰

The present study showed that smoking is more likely to be associated with over-response of platelets to clopidogrel. Such a finding is in agreement with the study of Ueno M *et al.*,³¹ Gremmel T *et al.*,³² and Jeong YH *et al.*³³ On the contrary, Dirk Sibbing *et al.*²⁸ showed a higher incidence of non-responders among smokers. This heterogeneity between the findings of our study and Dirk Sibbing *et al.*²⁸ study may be attributed to the impact of other factors on platelet responsiveness, such as patients’ presentation, the presence of diabetes, and CRF.

In addition, the smoking effect on platelet responsiveness is complicated and needs to be studied thoroughly in a future study to explain this variability in responsiveness.

The cases of CRF were more prone to have impaired platelet responsiveness to the effect of clopidogrel, which agrees with the study by Park SH *et al.*³⁴ and study by H Patrik *et al.*¹⁶

Study Outcomes

Early definite stent thrombosis events were significantly higher in the non-responsiveness group in the present study. This finding is similar to other studies conducted in Switzerland, France, USA, Germany and China.^{26,35-40} The bleeding events obviously to be more with the over-responsiveness group and is statistically significant, which agrees with Dirk Sibbing *et al.*,²⁸ Patti *et al.*,⁴¹ and Stone *et al.*⁴²

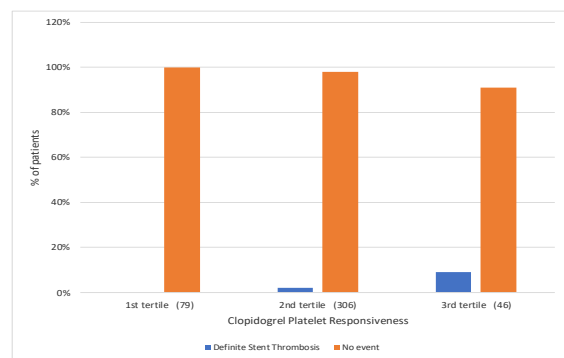


Figure 2: Distribution of stent thrombosis according to clopidogrel platelets responsiveness

Table 2: Distribution of clopidogrel platelets responsiveness in DM patients

Clopidogrel Platelet Responsiveness	Non-Diabetic		Diabetic		p-value
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	
1 st tertile (79)	49	62	30	38	< 0.05
2 nd tertile (306)	190	62.1	116	38	
3 rd tertile (46)	19	41.3	27	58.7	
Total (431)	258	59.9	173	40.1	-

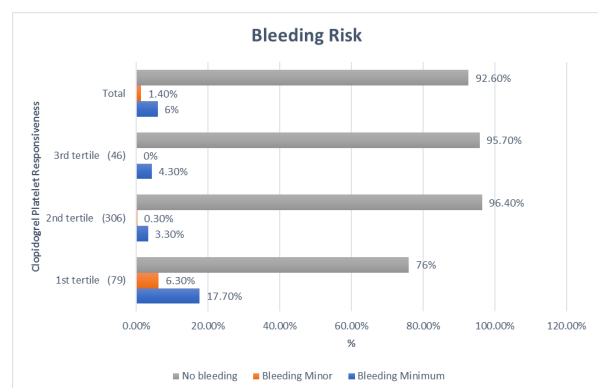


Figure 3: Distribution of bleeding events according to clopidogrel platelets responsiveness

Table 3: Association between clopidogrel platelets responsiveness and history of CRF

Clopidogrel platelet responsiveness	Chronic renal failure		Normal renal function		p-value
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	
1 st tertile (79)	4	5	75	95	< 0.005
2 nd tertile (306)	20	6.5	286	93.5	
3 rd tertile (46)	9	19.6	37	80.4	
Total (431)	33	7.7	398	92.3	

Table 4: Association of clopidogrel platelets responsiveness and smoking

Clopidogrel platelet responsiveness	Non-smoker		Smoker		p-value
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	
1 st tertile (79)	32	40.5	47	59.5	< 0.001
2 nd tertile (306)	197	64.4	109	35.6	
3 rd tertile (46)	32	69.6	14	30.4	
Total (431)	261	60.6	170	39.4	-

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Platelets aggregometry is an important, widely available, and strong predictor of adverse in-hospital outcomes for patients who have undergone PCI whether they presented in stable ischemic heart disease or ACS presentation with a higher risk of stent thrombosis in the non-responsiveness group. Diabetes and CRF were associated with reduced platelet responsiveness in general, exposing these patients to more risk of adverse outcomes. Although over-responsiveness carries more risk of bleeding events, under responsiveness seems to be protective against this adverse outcome.

The presence of 10% non-response in Iraqi people with the availability of such test makes it rational to recommend the test for the high-risk group and complex interventional cases (including LMS) to prevent fatal outcome such as stent thrombosis. Gene study is recommended for people with non-response to understand the highly variable rate of no-response all over the world.

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