

Medical Update Memo

February 25, 2005

Pilot study test combination of n-acetylcysteine and Copaxone as potential MS treatment

A small pilot study is underway in Quebec to test whether combining a frequently used anti-oxidant supplement called N-acetylcysteine (NAC) with glatiramer acetate (Copaxone®) will improve Copaxone's effectiveness. Eighteen people who have relapsing-remitting MS are taking part in the open-label study at two research centres. The study is examining the efficacy, tolerability and safety of the two products in combination.

Details

- ♦ The 46-week study involving 18 people with relapsing-remitting MS is taking place at two study sites: the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal and the Neuro-Rive Sud MS Clinic in Greenfield Park. Dr. Hyman Schipper at the Jewish General Hospital is the lead investigating neurologist.
- ♦ There is some evidence that adding NAC may enhance Copaxone's ability to protect nerve fibres (neuroprotection) and possibly slow the progression of the disease.
- ♦ Copaxone is approved by Health Canada as a treatment for relapsing-remitting MS. It is administered daily by under the skin injections. (For more information see the medical update memo *MS Disease Modifying Therapies in Canada*, June 30, 2004)
- ♦ N-acetylcysteine is an altered form of an amino acid, which is commonly found in food and synthesized by the body. It is an anti-oxidant with potential neuroprotective qualities.
- ♦ Results of the combination therapy will be assessed using both MRI and clinical measures.

- ♦ The study is sponsored by Teva Neuroscience.

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