

discharge, while ARBs, CCBs, β -blockers, statins, and ATs continued to be administered to over 90% of the patients who were prescribed the drugs at the time of discharge.

Continuation Rate of β -Blockers When Classified According to Lipophilicity/Receptor Binding Specificity

Beta-blockers can be classified according to their solubility or ability to specifically bind to β -1 receptors. Table 2 shows the classification, number of patients taking the drug, and mean dosage of all the β -blockers that physicians prescribed in this study. Figure 2 shows the continuation rate for β -blockers of each class. The continuation rate of hydrophilic β -blockers (84.4%) was significantly lower than that of lipophilic β -blockers (89.3%, $P < 0.001$). The continuation rate of non-selective β -blockers (79.1%) was significantly lower than that of β -1-selective β -blockers (87.2%, $P = 0.003$) or α - β -selective β -blockers (87.7%, $P = 0.002$).

Effect of β -Blockers on Endpoints

In order to investigate the effect of β -blockers, we performed a propensity score matching analysis. Those who were given

β -blockers at discharge were matched with those who were not given β -blockers at discharge. As shown in Table 3, all background characteristics and medication were well matched. Figure 3 shows the Kaplan-Meier plot for endpoint accumulation and HRs. There were no significant differences between those who were given β -blockers and those were not given β -blockers for any of the endpoints.

Differences in Effect of β -Blockers on Endpoints According to Lipophilicity

We sought to investigate if there were any differences in effectiveness between lipophilic and hydrophilic β -blockers on the endpoints. We performed propensity score matching between those who were given lipophilic β -blockers and those who were given hydrophilic β -blockers. As shown in Table 4, all background characteristics and medication were well matched. Figure 4 shows the Kaplan-Meier plot for endpoint accumulation and HRs. For the composite endpoints, cardiac endpoints and cerebral endpoints, there were no significant differences between lipophilic and hydrophilic β -blockers for outcome. For all-cause mortality, lipophilic

Table 4. Background Characteristics of Matched Patients With Hydrophilic or Lipophilic β -Blockers

| | Hydrophilic β -blockers (n=856) | Lipophilic β -blockers (n=856) | P value |
|--------------------------|--|---|---------|
| Age | 65.27 \pm 9.09 | 65.24 \pm 9.98 | 0.825 |
| Male | 650 (75.9%) | 666 (77.8%) | 0.359 |
| Hypertension | 571 (66.7%) | 563 (65.8%) | 0.683 |
| Hyperlipidemia | 514 (60.0%) | 519 (60.6%) | 0.805 |
| IFG | 356 (41.6%) | 343 (40.1%) | 0.523 |
| Obesity | 304 (35.5%) | 313 (36.6%) | 0.651 |
| Smoking | 333 (38.9%) | 324 (37.9%) | 0.655 |
| Drinking | 345 (40.3%) | 356 (41.6%) | 0.589 |
| Family history | 169 (19.7%) | 162 (18.9%) | 0.668 |
| CHF | 32 (3.7%) | 30 (3.5%) | 0.796 |
| LMT disease | 53 (6.2%) | 43 (5.0%) | 0.293 |
| No. of affected arteries | 1.87 \pm 0.82 | 1.87 \pm 0.81 | 0.948 |
| Statins | 413 (48.2%) | 400 (46.7%) | 0.529 |
| Fibrates | 32 (3.7%) | 32 (3.7%) | 1.000 |
| CCBs | 470 (54.9%) | 450 (52.6%) | 0.332 |
| ACEIs | 239 (27.9%) | 217 (25.4%) | 0.229 |
| ARBs | 135 (15.8%) | 143 (16.7%) | 0.600 |
| α -blockers | 25 (2.9%) | 21 (2.5%) | 0.550 |
| ATs | 808 (94.4%) | 810 (94.6%) | 0.832 |
| Nitrates | 529 (61.8%) | 537 (62.7%) | 0.690 |

P values of age and number of affected arteries were calculated by Kruskal-Wallis test. All other P values were calculated by chi-square test.

Abbreviations see in Table 1.

β -blockers showed a significantly better outcome compared to hydrophilic β -blockers (HR 0.467, 95% confidence interval 0.247–0.880, P=0.019).

Discussion

In this study of a large cohort of Japanese patients with angiographically determined CAD, we showed that despite the low prescription rate of β -blockers among Japanese physicians, the continuation rate was relatively high and that lipophilic β -blockers may be a better choice than hydrophilic ones if mortality risks are considered.

As mentioned earlier, Japanese physicians have been reluctant to adopt β -blockers as a treatment for hypertension. Although the guidelines for the management of hypertension published by the Japanese Society of Hypertension in 2009 include β -blockers as a first-line therapy for hypertension,¹⁵ among Japanese physicians it is generally perceived that compared to CCBs, ACEIs and ARBs, β -blockers are more difficult to use because of their unfavorable effects on glucose metabolism^{1,2} and pulmonary diseases.¹⁶ Cardiologists are also highly aware of the bradycardia and hypotension induced by β -blockers. Previous reports have shown that even for patients with CAD, the prescription rate of β -blockers is significantly lower in Japan (\approx 30%^{4,17}) than in the West (\approx 85%¹⁸).

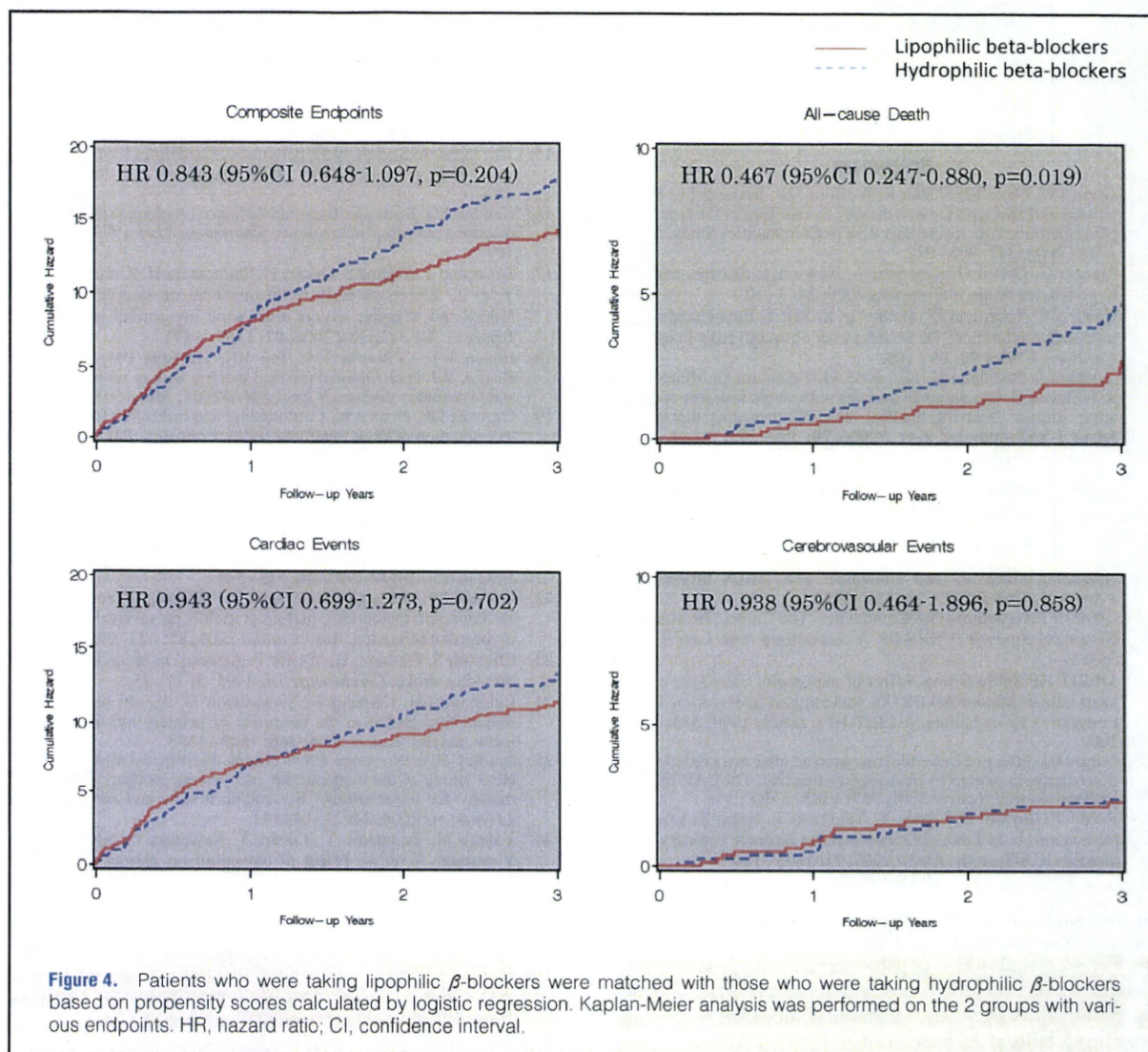
That trend was also observed in this study, in which only 30.1% of CAD patients were prescribed β -blockers. Despite the fact that in this study we combined α - β -blockers and pure β -blockers under the same classification of β -blockers, unlike in our previous report,¹⁰ the overall prescription rate was still lower than that reported in Western studies.

However, this study showed that the adherence rate of β -blockers was over 90%, suggesting that for those patients in whom β -blockers were indicated, the attending physi-

cian abided by the prescription and β -blockade therapy was well tolerated. We could not show any beneficial effect of β -blockers on such endpoints as cardiac events, all-cause mortality, cerebral events, or the composite of such events (Figure 3), even when we matched the background and medication pattern of those who were given β -blockers and those who were not (Table 3). Before matching, patients who were prescribed β -blockers had a significantly higher rate of hypertension, hyperlipidemia, obesity, family history of CAD and a higher number of diseased arteries (Table 1). It is possible that other factors that were not measured in this study were unbalanced between the groups and affected the results so that beneficial effects were not observed for β -blockers. This problem in evaluating the efficacy of drugs in observational studies is known as “confounding by indication”.¹⁹

Beta-blockers can be classified according to such properties as lipophilicity, β -receptor-blockade specificity and intrinsic sympathomimetic activity, which, aside from the class effect of β -blockers, reportedly cause differences in various outcomes,²⁰ with several clinical studies supporting this claim.^{7,8,21} In the present study, lipophilic β -blockers reduced the risk of all-cause mortality significantly more than hydrophilic β -blockers, which is in contrast to a recent observational study that showed that the survival rate among 3 β -blockers, 2 of which were lipophilic and 1 of which was hydrophilic, did not differ after acute MI when adjusted for several factors.²² However, the results of several randomized, controlled clinical trials using a hydrophilic β -blocker have failed to show any benefit in reducing cardiovascular or all-cause mortality against placebo in hypertensive patients.^{21,23} Although the findings in our study cannot be directly extrapolated to daily practice, careful consideration may be needed when selecting a medication.

Although β -blockers have recently been called into ques-



tion as a first-line therapy for hypertension,^{24,25} certain types have been shown to be effective in reducing cardiovascular risks for patients with comorbidities, such as CHF^{7,8,26} or OMI.^{9,27,28} We could not show that β -blockers as a class confer beneficial effects in reducing cardiovascular, cerebrovascular or all-cause mortality endpoints nor the composite of such endpoints in this study, which may be attributed to "confounding by indication". Within the β -blocker drug class, it appears that lipophilic β -blockers may be superior to hydrophilic β -blockers in reducing all-cause mortality, although a randomized controlled study is needed to confirm that result.

In conclusion, this study showed that despite the low prescription rate of β -blockers for CAD patients among Japanese physicians, the continuation rate was relatively high, which suggests that they are well tolerated. We could not show a clear benefit of β -blockers for various outcomes, which might be attributed to "confounding by indication". Better outcomes with lipophilic β -blockers compared with hydrophilic β -blockers were observed for all-cause mortality, although further investigation is needed to confirm this finding.

Adherence to guidelines that are based on rigid scientific evidence is necessary for the improvement of care, and observational studies similar to the JCAD study are warranted in the future to monitor and improve cardiovascular care.

Study Limitations

This study was an observational study and not a randomized controlled study. Although survival analysis was performed with propensity score matching, it is possible that factors that were not measured in this study were skewed between groups and affected the results. One major factor could be chronic kidney disease. No data regarding renal function was obtained in this study because, unlike the way it is viewed today, it was not regarded as a strong component of cardiovascular risk at the time the study was planned. It should also be noted that while analysis was performed on the assumption that patients were continually taking the medicines, it is possible that the prescription at the time of discharge was changed later in the follow-up period, which is suggested in the results of the continuation rate of drugs we have shown.

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東大病院 世界初 国際標準で 臨床データの収集を開始

将来的には治験での使用も

東京大医学部付属病院は、同院に設置されている大学病院医療情報ネットワーク (UMIN) で、治験交換データの国際標準「CDISC標準」に基づいた臨床研究データの収集を始める。CDISC標準は新薬申請のために必要となる電子データの様式を定めたものだが、実際にはまだ運用されておらず、同標準を使用したデータの収集は世界初となる。同標準による研究データの収集が進めば、手間を省くのに大規模にデータを集めることも可能で、臨床研究の進展が期待される。将来的には治験での使用も想定している。



会見する大内氏 (左) と木内氏

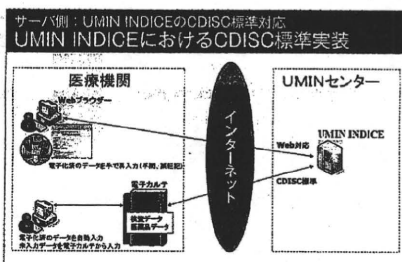
CDISC標準は医薬品の電子申請に必要なデータの仕様や通信規約、治験の内容の定義などをまとめたもの。米国食品医薬品局 (FDA) はCDISC標準に基づいた新薬の電子申請を検討しており、近い将来義務化される可能性もあるという。

製薬会社などはCDISC標準に対応したシステム構築を急いでいるが、現在はまだ使用されていないという。

同院の大学病院医療情報ネットワーク研究センター (通称UMINセンター) センター長の木内貴弘氏は、製薬企業が申請するシステム構築を進めており、CDISC標準に基づいて医療機関側から治験データを集めるシステム構築が進んでいない点に注目した。治験に使用するためには規制が厳しいため、将来的に治験でも応用できる可能性をにらみ、臨床研究でCDISC標準を用いたデータ収集を開始するシステムの構築を始めた。

国内最大の臨床研究のためのインターネット情報センターであるUMINを使用する。CDISC標準に基づいたデータが数多くUMINに集まれば、統一した様式の大規模なデータベースを構築できる。

現在、医療機関では、それぞれ違う様式のソフトウェアで電子カルテを管理しており、治験データなどを提供する際には研究用に新たにデータを打ち込まなくてはならなかつ



出典: UMINセンター

た。CDISC標準に統一するソフトウェアを導入すれば、標準化された様式でデータを提供することができ

福島県立医科大 乳がんの臨床研究で使用

福島県立医科大は試験的な運用としてCDISC標準に基づいたデータ収集による電子化臨床研究を11月から開始する。乳がんの術前化学療法における高用量トレミフェンの上乗せ効果を検討する。電子カルテからの情報をCDISC標準に統一するためのソフトウェアを導入した。

具体的には、福島県立医科大がまず臨床研究用のデータ入力フォームを作成する。データフォームには身長、体重や生年月日などの基礎情報のほか、「乳がんであることが医学的に証明されている患者」「文書による同意が得られている患者」などのチェックを付ける枠と検査データを記入する枠を設ける。チェックは担当者が付けるが、検査データは対象患者の電子カルテから自動的に入力される。データはUMIN側に集約

る。また、提供側の電子カルテからデータ収集を半自動化、自動化することが可能で、提供側はあらかじめデータを打ち込む必要がなく、ミスを防ぐことができる。電子カルテから収集する情報は検査データと医薬品の処方データに限定する。

今回導入したのは、福島県立医科大だけだが、現在、別の1大学がシステム構築に取り組んでいるという。木内氏は「データ収集の半自動化、全自動化により、100万例や200万例の大規模研究も速やかに行うことができる。導入を促進していきたい」とシステムの広がり期待している。

される。

同大では、20症例を目標に研究を行う。同大を含めて7施設が参加する予定だが、同大以外はシステムが構築されていないため、これまで通りの入力方法でデータを集める。

疫学研究での効果も期待

木内氏は「(システムが広がれば)疫学研究でも効果が期待できる。現在は臨床研究での運用だが、将来的に治験で実用するための基盤となる」としている。福島県立医科大のNEDOプロジェクト事業特任教授の大竹徹氏は「臨床研究用にデータを変換する手間がなくなり、データ収集の手間が大幅に削減できる。今後の臨床試験が加速するのでは」と効果を期待している。

