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**Combined Treatment with Interferon Alpha and Ribavirin
for Chronic Hepatitis C in Patients with Previous
Non-response or Relapse to Interferon Alone**

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Background/Aims: Interferon-alpha has been effective in 10-20% of treated patients with chronic hepatitis C (CH-C) on a long term basis. We conducted this study to evaluate the biochemical and virological outcomes of combined treatment with interferon alpha and ribavirin for the patients who had CH-C but showed non-response or relapse to interferon alpha alone. **Methods:** Twenty five patients with CH-C who had not responded or relapsed to interferon alpha alone treatment were enrolled. Eighteen patients were given by the combined treatment of interferon alpha and ribavirin and 7 patients were not given any specific treatment as control. Interferon alpha-2a was given subcutaneously, at a dose of 4.5 MU thrice weekly. Ribavirin was also given orally, at a dose of 900 mg/day for 24 weeks. We quantified serum HCV-RNA levels at the end of treatment. **Results:** The normalization rate of serum ALT at the end of treatment was 47.1% (8/17) in treated group and 14.3% (1/7) in control group and negative conversion of HCV-RNA was noted in all patients. In the treated group, 75% (6/8) of responders at the end of treatment sustained serum ALT level normally during 24 weeks follow-up, but none has responded persistently in the control group. **Conclusions** The combined treatment with interferon alpha and ribavirin is effective and safe for treating chronic

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hepatitis C in patients who showed non-response or relapse to interferon alone. (Kor J Gastroenterol 1999;33:232 - 239)

Key Words: Chronic C viral hepatitis, Interferon alpha, Ribavirin, Non-response and relapse

1. C 3 6 (Intermax[®], LG) 3 , 가 20 ALT 6 5 RNA (HCV-RNA) 18 450 (Roferon-[®], Roche Co.) 3 24 900 mg ALT 가 25.0% .1 가 , 24 . Table 1

2. nucleoside analogue , , 6 가 C -70 nucleoside analogue nested-RT PCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) HCV-RNA RNA AMV reverse transcriptase cDNA

Table 1. Subject Characteristics of Treated and Control Group

	Treated	Control
Male/Female	14/4	4/3
Age (years)*	47.0 ± 11.1	34.6 ± 8.9
ALT (IU/L)*	155.1 ± 72.1	87.7 ± 66.9
HCV RNA titer* (105 copies/mL)	2.5 ± 2.6	NC †
Previous Treatment response (NR/RE)‡	13/5	7/10

*, Mean ± SD; †, not checked; ‡, NR-Non response/RE-Relapse.

Fig. 1. Change of mean serum ALT in treated and control group. SR; sustained response; RE, relapse; NR, non-response.

5'-untranslated region
 2 nested PCR
 260 base pair
 HCV-RNA
 copy number quantitation standard
 RT-PCR colorimetric micro-
 well plate detection HCV-RNA
 Amplicor™ HCV Monitor test (Roche Diagnostic
 System, Branchburg, NJ, USA)
 HCV-RNA

1. ALT
 18 1 3
 17
 ALT 가
 8 (47.1%)
 12 5
 5 3
 ALT 가
 7 1 (14.3%)
 ALT 가
 ALT
 6
 6 ALT 가
 ALT

Fig. 2. Biochemical and virological response in treated and control group. ETR, response at end of treatment; SR, sustained response.

ALT 가
 8 6 (75.0%) 1
 ALT 가
 1 5 6
 ALT 가
 ALT 가 1 6
 ALT 가
 2. HCV-RNA
 17 ALT 가 8
 nested-RT PCR
 HCV-RNA가
 HCV-RNA 85,000-480,000 copies/mL
 24.6-40.6 copies/mL
 HCV-RNA 70,000-790,000 copies/mL

Table 2. Characteristics of the Patients according to Response at End of Treatment

	Response (n=8)	Non-response (n=9)
Male/Female	6/2	7/2
Age (years)*	44.4 ± 12.5	48.0 ± 10.1
ALT (IU/L)*	146.6 ± 63.9	172.6 ± 77.8
HCV RNA titer (105 copies/mL)	2.1 ± 1.5	3.6 ± 3.6
Previous treatment response (NR/RE) †	5/3	7/2

*, Mean ± SD; †, NR-Non response/RE-Relapse.

Table 3. Characteristics of the Patients according to Sustained Response

	Sustained response (n=6)	Relapse (n=2)
Male/Female	5/1	1/1
Age (years)	41.2 ± 12.8	54.0 ± 4.2
ALT (IU/L)	152.3 ± 74.1	129.5 ± 20.5
HCV RNA titer (105 copies/mL)	1.3 ± 3.9	3.7 ± 1.5
Previous treatment response (NR/RE)	3/3	2/0
HCV RNA titer at ET* (105 copies/mL)	34.5 ± 7.6	30.5 ± 0.4

*, end of treatment.

Fig. 3. Change of HCV-RNA titer in treated group before and after treatment. SR, sustained response; RE, relapse; NR, non-response.

28.5-830,000 copies/mL 가
 (Fig. 2, 3). , ALT ,
 HCV-RNA
 3.
 HCV-RNA 1.3 ± 3.9 × 105 copies/mL
 3.7 ± 1.5 × 105 copies/mL
 (Table 3).
 HCV-RNA
 (Table 2),

4. ALT 40%, HCV-RNA
30% 2 , 3
8 가 (7 12 24
), (5), (4), (2), ALT 45.5%
(1) , 6
(Hb<12g/dL) 5 36.4% 3
(39.4%) (WBC<3,000/
ul) 4 , (platelet<105/ul) 3
. 가 .
가 . ,
C 80% 가
20% .47
. C
C 가
가 C 가 ()
가 C 가 , 60%
3 6 .3 10%
.47 2
12 75-85%
40-50% ALT ALT 가 30-40%
가 30-40% HCV-RNA가 ALT 가
. 50% .47
6 ALT 가
15-20%,
HCV-RNA가 10-20% guanosine analogue
. C DNA RNA
3 6
3 24
ALT 50%, HCV-RNA RNA-dependent RNA polymerase ino-
35.7% , 6 sine monophosphate dehydrogenase
ALT 가 guanosine-triphosphate
25.0% .1 3 6
6 12 .8
ALT 63.0%, C
HCV-RNA 56.7% , Reichard 9

가 ALT 가 , , ALT HCV-RNA
RNA .810 2.1 ± 1.5 × 10⁵ copies/mL
3.6 ± 3.6 × 10⁵ copies/mL 가
11-15가 . 3 24
800-1,200 mg meta- analysis
62% 가가 .
ALT 가 42% HCV-RNA가
6 21%
HCV-RNA , 60% 가 가 .
HCV-RNA 5
가
41.6% 60%
ALT 가 HCV-RNA
25% 60% ALT 가
가 . 가 .
: C 25%
가 17가
. 18가
가 nucleoside
analogue
HCV-RNA
HCV-RNA
Simmonds C 3 6
1b 3 , 12
가 가 20 6
.19 5 . 18
450 3
, 가 24 , 900
mg 24 . 7
. Brillanti 12 C , 6
. Amplicor™ HCV Monitor test

HCV-RNA
 ALT 가 8 (47.1%)
 7 1 (14.3%)
 ALT 가 8
 HCV-RNA가
 6 6
 ALT 가
 ALT
 가
 , , ALT ,
 HCV-RNA
 HCV-RNA
 :
 가
 가

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1. , , . C
 1996;51(suppl 1):174.
2. , , , , .
 C Interferon-alpha
 1996;51:168-177.
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