INAPPROPRIATE DOSING OF METOPROLOL TARTRATE IN THE OUTPATIENT SETTING

ACC Poster Contributions
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Background: We sought to examine the reliability of Metoprolol drug history in patients attending an outpatient cardiology clinic. Most patients and medical records do not report whether the tartrate or succinate preparation is being used. We hypothesized that a significant number of patients are on the incorrect dosing schedule for the preparation they are taking (i.e., patient on short-acting metoprolol tartrate taken once daily).

Methods: This was an observational study. 305 subjects from our cardiology clinic were contacted by telephone by a physician on the study protocol.

Results: 68.9% (204/305) of patients taking Metoprolol Tartrate, were taking the medication incorrectly (once daily). Of this group, 41.2% (82/204) were prescribed Metoprolol Tartrate once a day, while the remaining 58.8% (122/204) took the medication daily, despite the fact that the prescription was written as twice daily.

Conclusions: We found that more than two thirds of patients taking short-acting Metoprolol Tartrate were taking the medication once daily, and therefore under-dosed. Approximately 40% of the time this was due to prescriber error. Given the lack of clarity of Tartrate vs. Succinate dosing and the recent shortage of the Succinate preparation, these data suggest practitioners should no longer assume that a patient taking Metoprolol once daily is on the long-acting preparation.