ORIGINAL ARTICLE

FREE PREVIEW

Cardiovascular Risk Reduction with Icosapent Ethyl for Hypertriglyceridemia

Deepak L. Bhatt, M.D., M.P.H., P. Gabriel Steg, M.D., Michael Miller, M.D., Eliot A. Brinton, M.D., Terry A. Jacobson, M.D., Steven B. Ketchum, Ph.D., Ralph T. Doyle, Jr., B.A., Rebecca A. Juliano, Ph.D., Lixia Jiao, Ph.D., Craig Granowitz, M.D., Ph.D., Jean-Claude Tardif, M.D., and Christie M. Ballantyne, M.D.et al., for the REDUCE-IT Investigators*

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Abstract

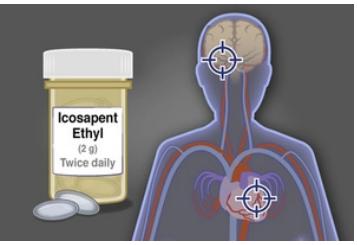
BACKGROUND Patients with elevated triglyceride levels are at increased risk for ischemic events. Icosapent ethyl, a highly purified eicosapentaenoic acid ethyl ester, lowers triglyceride levels, but data are needed to determine its effects on ischemic events.

METHODS We performed a multicenter, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial involving patients with established cardiovascular disease or with diabetes and other risk factors, who had been receiving statin therapy and who had a fasting triglyceride level of 135 to 499 mg per deciliter (1.52 to 5.63 mmol per liter) and a low-density lipoprotein cholesterol level of 41 to 100 mg per deciliter (1.06 to 2.59 mmol per liter). The patients were randomly assigned to receive 2 g of icosapent ethyl twice daily (total daily dose, 4 g) or placebo. The primary end point was a composite of cardiovascular death, nonfatal myocardial infarction, nonfatal stroke, coronary revascularization, or unstable angina. The key secondary end point was a composite of cardiovascular death, nonfatal myocardial infarction, or nonfatal stroke.

RESULTS A total of 8179 patients were enrolled (70.7% for secondary prevention of cardiovascular events) and were followed for a median of 4.9 years. A primary end-point event occurred in 17.2% of the patients in the icosapent ethyl group, as compared with 22.0% of the patients in the placebo group (hazard ratio, 0.75; 95% confidence interval [CI], 0.68 to 0.83; P<0.001); the corresponding rates of the key secondary end point were 11.2% and 14.8% (hazard ratio, 0.74; 95% CI, 0.65 to 0.83; P<0.001). The rates of additional ischemic end points, as assessed according to a prespecified hierarchical schema, were significantly lower in the icosapent ethyl group than in the placebo group,

including the rate of cardiovascular death (4.3% vs. 5.2%; hazard ratio, 0.80; 95% CI, 0.66 to 0.98; P=0.03). A larger percentage of patients in the icosapent ethyl group than in the placebo group were hospitalized for atrial fibrillation or flutter (3.1% vs. 2.1%, P=0.004). Serious bleeding events occurred in 2.7% of the patients in the icosapent ethyl group and in 2.1% in the placebo group (P=0.06).

CONCLUSIONS Among patients with elevated triglyceride levels despite the use of statins, the risk of ischemic events, including cardiovascular death, was significantly lower among those who received 2 g of icosapent ethyl twice daily than among those who received placebo. (Funded by Amarin Pharma; REDUCE-IT ClinicalTrials.gov number, NCT01492361.)



QUICK TAKE VIDEO SUMMARY

Cardiovascular Risk Reduction with Icosapent Ethyl

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Funding and Disclosures

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Disclosure forms provided by the authors are available with the full text of this article at NEJM.org.

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A data sharing statement provided by the authors is available with the full text of this article at NEJM.org.

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Author Affiliations

From Brigham and Women's Hospital Heart and Vascular Center and Harvard Medical School, Boston (D.L.B.); FACT (French Alliance for Cardiovascular Trials), Département Hospitalo-Universitaire FIRE (Fibrose, Inflammation, and Remodeling), Assistance Publique–Hôpitaux de Paris, Hôpital Bichat, Université Paris-Diderot, INSERM Unité 1148, Paris (P.G.S.); National Heart and Lung Institute, Imperial College, Royal Brompton Hospital, London (P.G.S.); the Department of Medicine, University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore (M.M.); the Utah Lipid Center, Salt Lake City (E.A.B.); the Office of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Department of Medicine, Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta (T.A.J.); Amarin Pharma, Bedminster, NJ (S.B.K., R.T.D.J., R.A.J., L.J., C.G.); Montreal Heart Institute, Université de Montréal, Montreal (J.-C.T.); and the Department of Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine, and the Center for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention, Methodist DeBakey Heart and Vascular Center, Houston (C.M.B.).

Address reprint requests to Dr. Bhatt at Brigham and Women's Hospital Heart and Vascular Center, Harvard Medical School, 75 Francis St., Boston, MA 02115, or at dlbhattmd@post.harvard.edu.

A complete list of the REDUCE-IT trial investigators is provided in the Supplementary Appendix, available at NEJM.org.