

Heme Myths!!



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GENERAL
HEMATOLOGY

DISCLOSURE

Relevant Financial Relationship(s)

Speaker's Bureau – none

Author: UpToDate (Iron Tx)

Talk

- A potpourri of issues that commonly come up

Pain Control

- “Doc can I stop my blood thinners as my hip is killing me since I can’t take motrin”

NSAID and Anticoagulation

- Will raise risk of bleeding
 - Antiplatelet effect
 - GI toxicity
- Options for anticoagulated patients
 - DOAC/PPI plus
 - Celecoxib
 - Meloxicam
 - NSAIA (accepting risk of bleeding)

Co-administered OACs with NSAIDs and the risk of bleeding



Systematic review & meta-analysis
(PubMed, Embase, Cochrane Library, Web of Science)
Any study with a VKAs/DOACs & NSAIDs arm and a VKAs/DOACs alone arm or with a VKAs & NSAIDs arm and a DOACs & NSAIDs arm



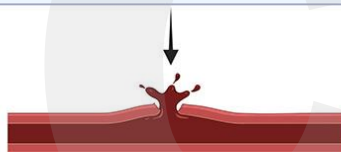
27 studies
(22 observational studies, 5 RCTs)



1,182,540 patients
(mean age: 59.3-83 years)

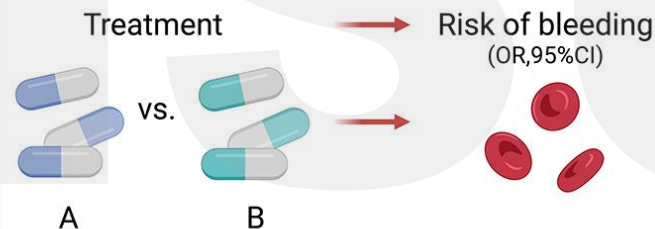


median follow-up:
0.5-14 years



Primary outcome: the risk of bleeding

Results



	Any bleeding	GI bleeding	Major bleeding
VKAs & NSAIDs vs. VKAs alone	1.55 [1.21-2.00]	2.66 [1.96-3.62]	1.55 [1.04-2.30]
DOACs & NSAIDs vs. DOACs alone	1.54 [1.33-1.80]	2.18 [1.02-4.69]	1.42 [0.84-2.40]
DOACs & NSAIDs vs. VKAs & NSAIDs	Risk of bleeding: 0.55 [0.34-0.90]		

Conclusions

- Co-administered OACs with NSAIDs significantly increased the risk of any bleeding and GI bleeding.
- Inconsistent results were observed regarding the risk of major bleeding.
- Without considering other confounding factors, DOACs were associated with a lower risk of bleeding compared to VKAs in AF and VTE patients.



**Macrocytosis – not always
a harbinger of doom!**

Macrocytosis

- RBC bigger than normal
- Not well standardized
- My worry point > 100 fl

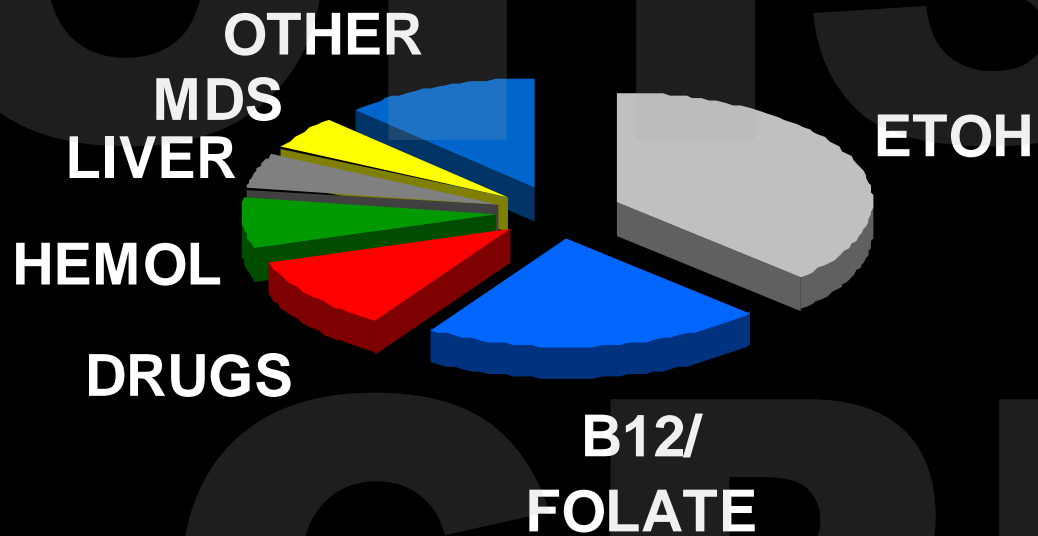
Macrocytic Anemia

- Round
 - Membrane defects
- Oval
 - DNA synthetic defects
 - Smear with megaloblastic changes

Macrocytosis

- **Ovalomacocytes**
 - B₁₂/folate deficiency
 - Drugs: chemotherapy, AZT, anticonvulsants
 - Myelodysplasia
- **Macrocyte**
 - Liver disease
 - Hypothyroidism
 - Reticulocytosis
 - Alcohol
 - Pregnancy

CAUSES OF MACROCYTOSIS



Causes of Macrocytosis

- Broad differential
- Most macrocytosis not due to B₁₂/folate deficiency
- Lets run the other causes!

MDS

- **Clonal bone marrow disease resulting in:**
 - **Ineffective production**
 - **Predisposition to leukemia**
- **More common in older patients**

Clues to MDS

- **Macrocytic anemia with other cell lines down**
- **Previous chemo or radiation therapy**
- **Nutrition normal**
- **Dx: genetics/marrow**

Drugs

- Cytotoxic agents
 - Azathioprine
 - Methotrexate
- Sulfasalazine
- TMP-SMX
- Antivirals – d4T, lamivudine, valacyclovir, zidovudine
- Anticonvulsants – phenytoin, valproic acid

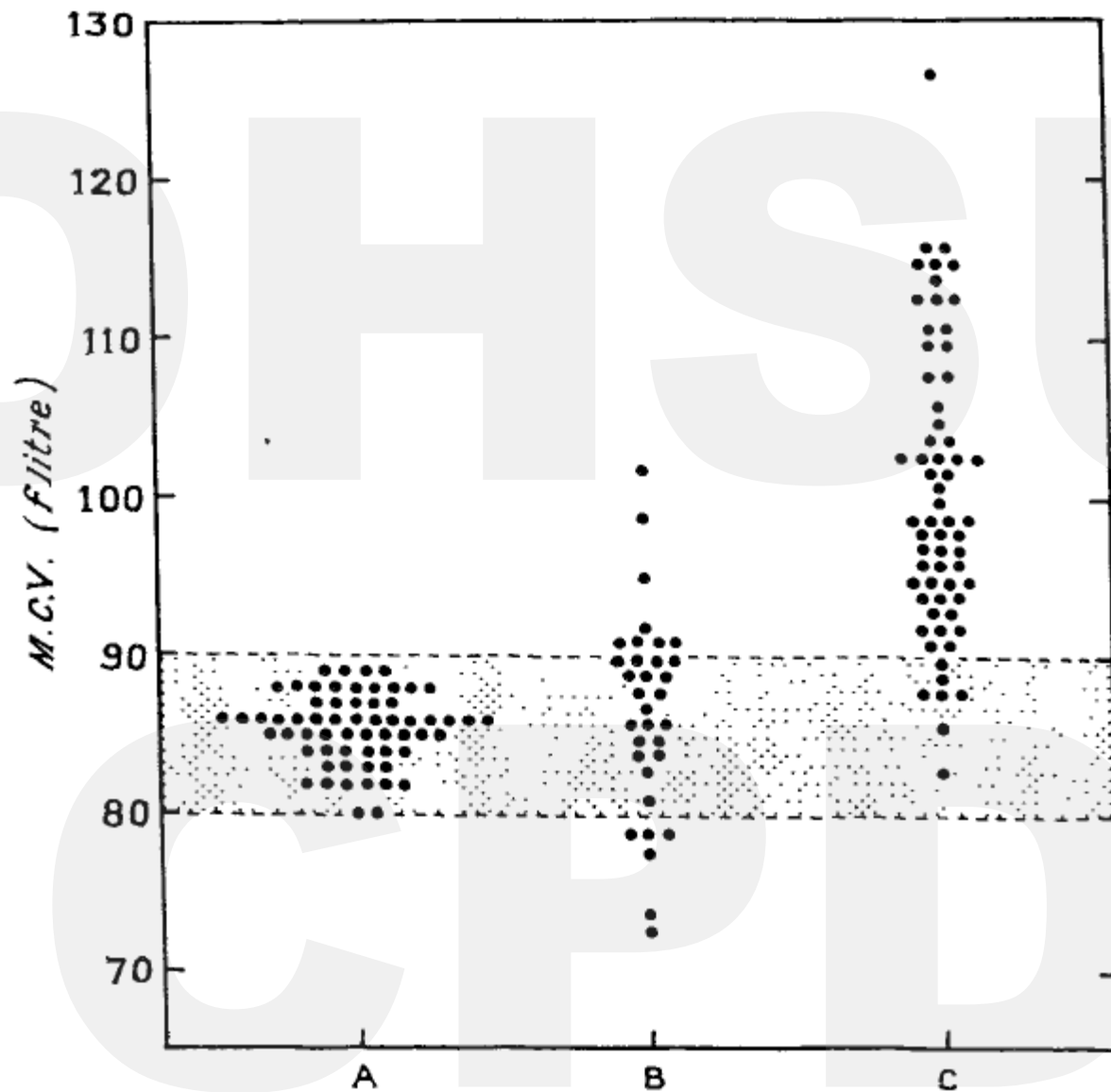


Pregnancy

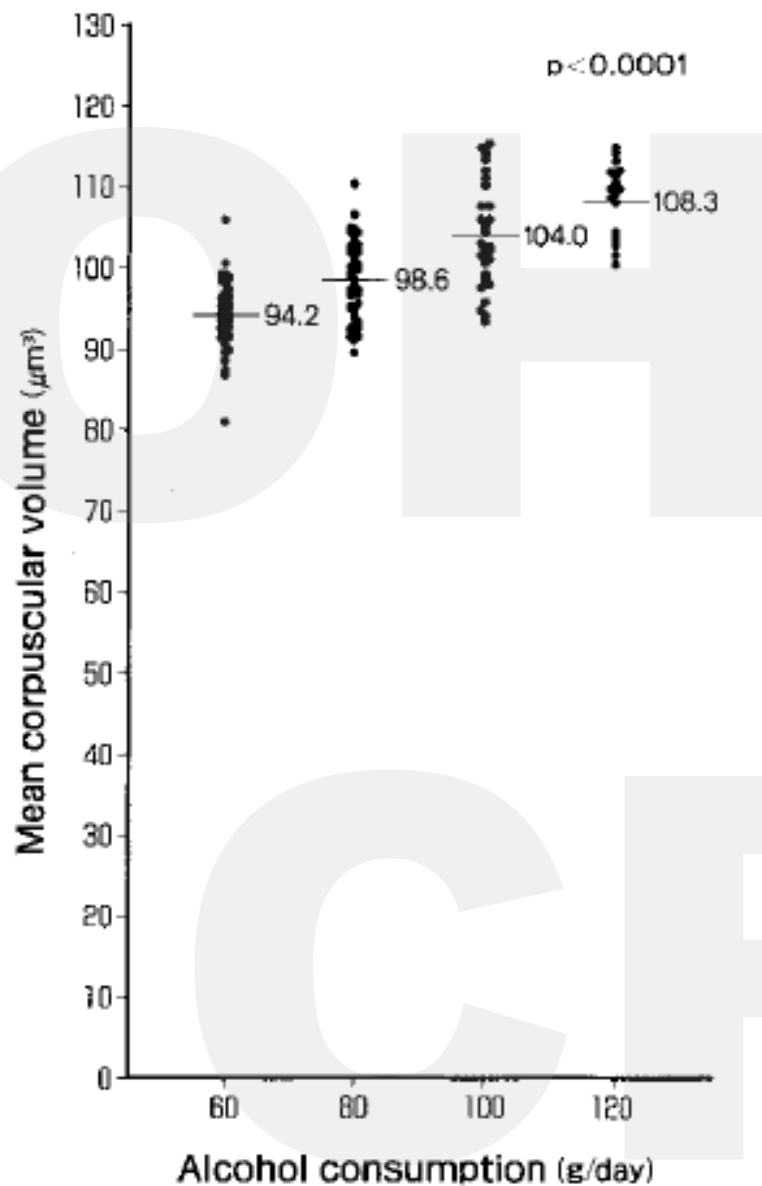
- Normally MCV can rise 4fl with pregnancy
 - Can be up to 20fl (100-110)
- Often masked by iron deficiency

Alcohol

- Leads to rise in MCV
 - Abnormal lipid metabolism
 - Interference folate metabolism
 - Very high Hcy
- Can be as high as 120 fl
- Need good alcohol history







Lancet 1974



A Standard Drink in the US

= 18 mL or 14 g of alcohol

			
Beer (5% ABV) 12 oz (355 mL)	Wine (12% ABV) 5 oz (~150 mL)	Liqueur (24% ABV) 2.5 oz (~75 mL)	Spirit (40% ABV; 80 proof) 1.5 oz (~45 mL)

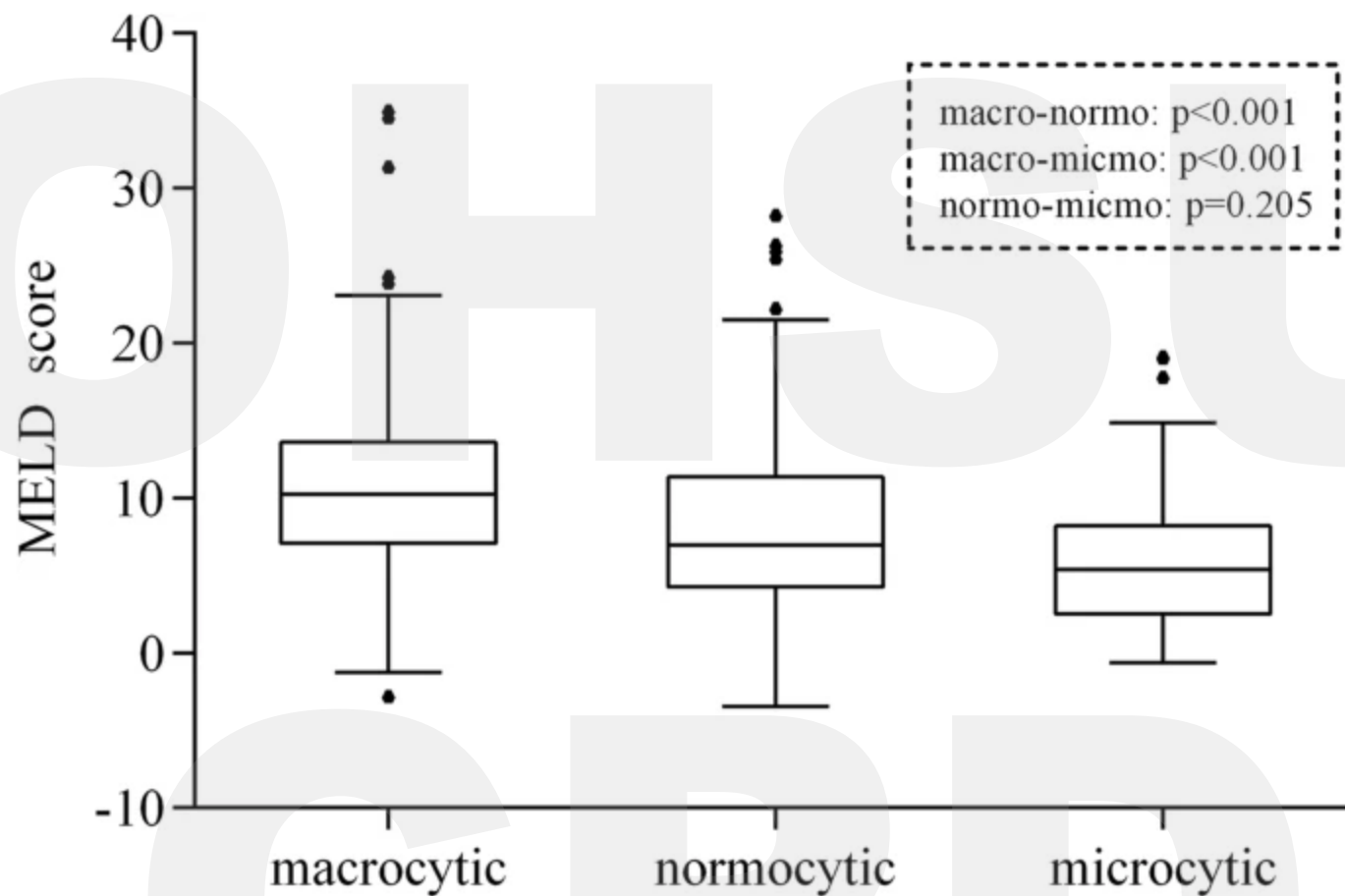
* ABV = Alcohol By Volume

©Nutrientsreview.com

Liver Disease

- Independent of alcohol
- Abnormal lipids in membrane
- Related to severity of liver disease
- Can be masked by iron deficiency

Fig. 2



Reticulocytosis

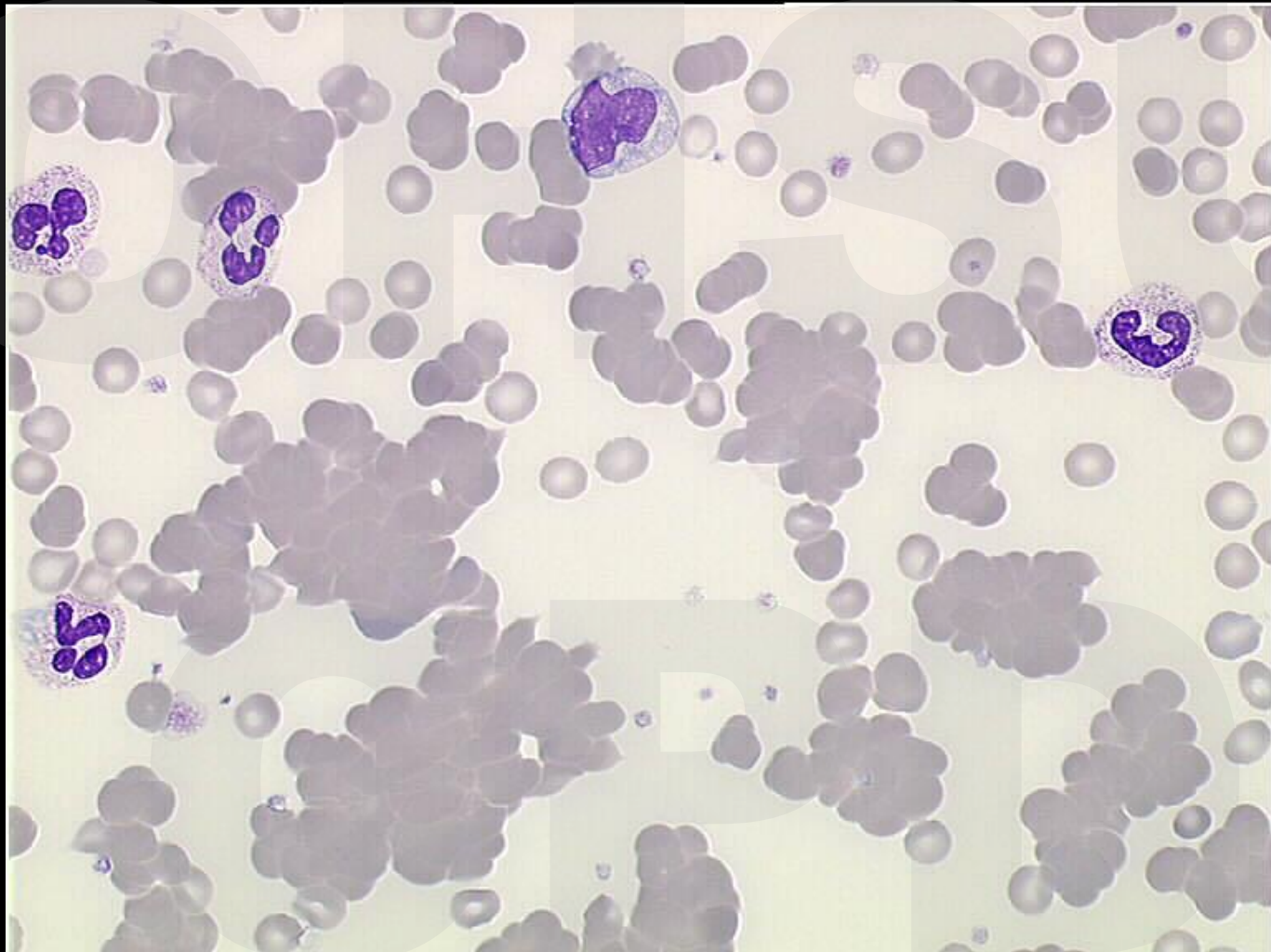
- MCV of a reticulocyte is ~ 160 fl
- Brisk reticulocytoses can lead to high MCV

“Shift cell”



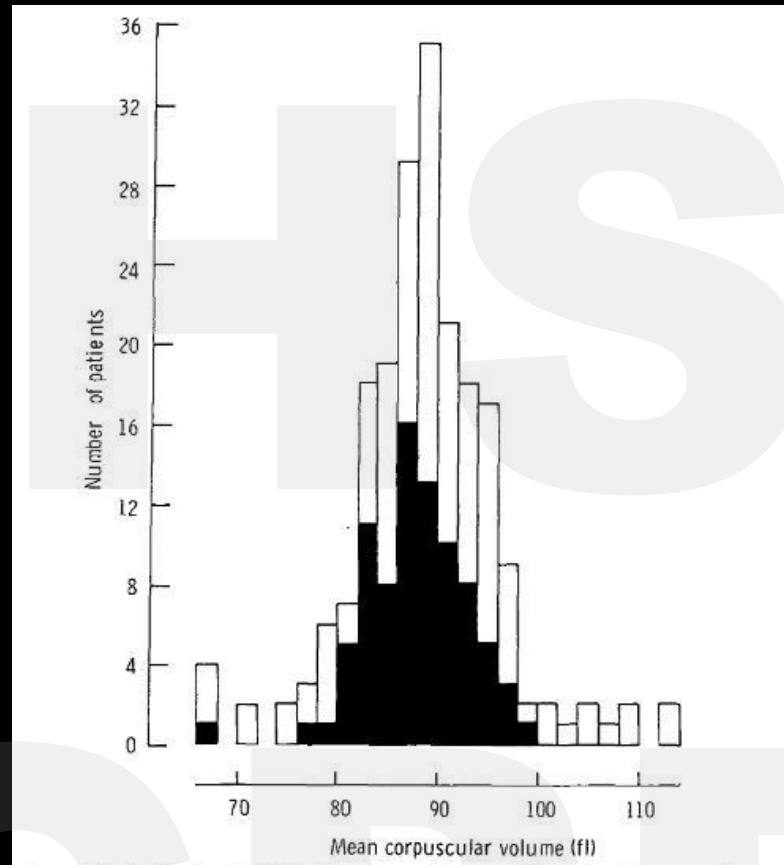
Cold Agglutinins

- Spurious macrocytosis
- Red cells clumped together
- Often crazy MCVs (180 fl)



Thyroid Disease

- Usually mild macrocytosis (~ 100 fl)
- > 100 fl usually concomitant B12 deficiency

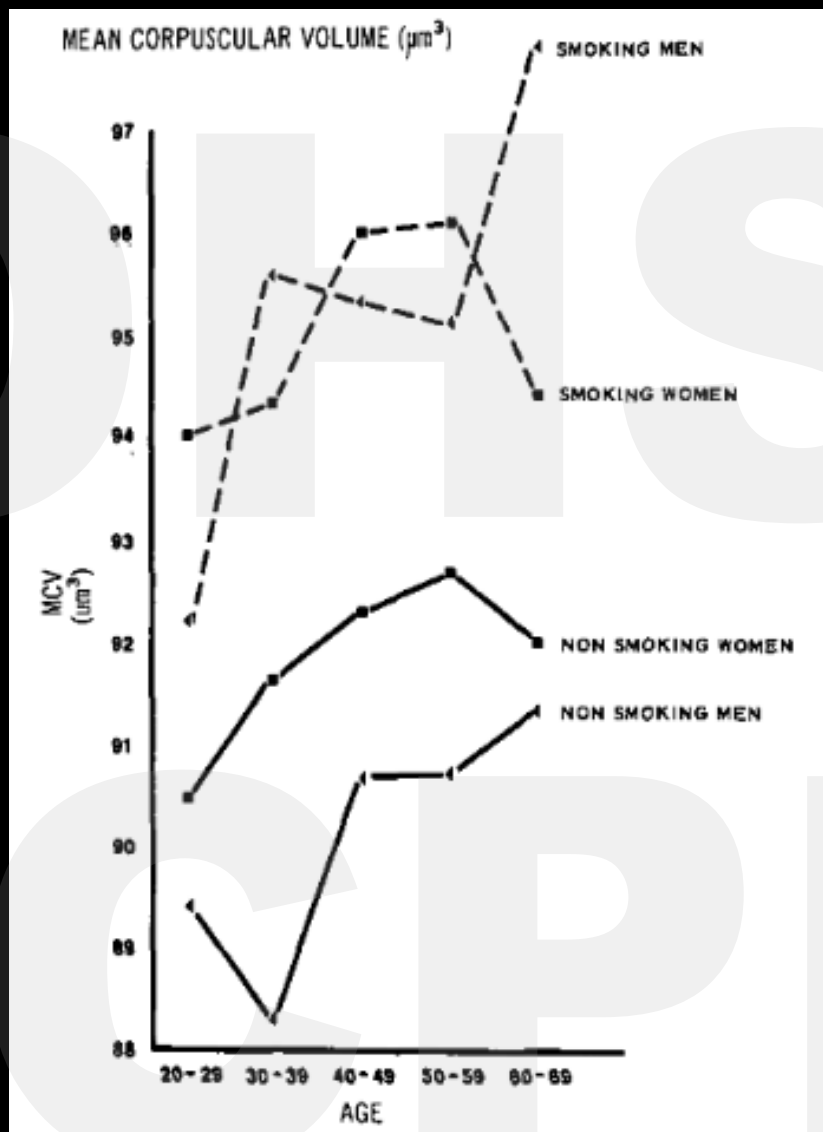


*** All patients MCV > 100 also had B₁₂ deficiency**

QJM: 45:101, 1979

Smoking

- Smoking leads to marrow stress
- Aldehydes and other smoking toxins leading to RBC damage
- Rare > 100 fl



Am J Clin Path 63:35-44, 1975

COPD

- Strong association with hypoxic COPD and high MCV
- Increased reticulocytosis



Resp Med 98:1117, 2004

MGUS

- 5% can have macrocytosis (100-109 fl)
- No relationship to size of monoclonal protein
- Not prognostic indicator



Copper Deficiency

- Increasing reports
- Severe anemia
- Neutropenia can be severe
- Marrow resembles MDS
- Seen in:
 - TPN
 - Bariatric surgery
 - Zinc toxicity
 - No obvious reason

Copper Deficiency

- **Neuro defects**
 - Ataxic and sensory loss
- **Classic heme picture**
 - Neutropenia
 - Anemia (often macrocytic)
 - Normal platelets

Diagnosis

- Copper level
- Therapy
 - Copper



Evaluation of Macrocytosis

- **Key Question!**
 - Is the patient anemic?

Benign Macrocytosis

- Most patients with macrocytosis and normal blood counts have no underlying hematological disease
- Can be familial

Benign Macrocytosis

- **My work-up (not anemic)**
 - **History**
 - **Evaluate nutrients**
 - **MMA/Hcy/copper**
 - **Check TSH**
 - **Check reticulocyte count**

Evaluation of Macrocytosis

- If anemic
- History
- MMA/Hcy/Copper
 - Older SPEP/Light chains
- TSH
- Retic count
- If worrisome ->marrow/genetics



Is Aspirin Safer than Warfarin?

- Aspirin often given to afib or DVT patients because it is perceived to be “safer”
- But is it???



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able of taste, free from unpleasant after-
effects.

HEROIN

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HEROIN HYDROCHLORIDE

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a supply from your jobber.

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40 Stone Street, New York,

SOLE AGENTS

The Treatment of Anemia.

By W. F. KING, M.D.,
Columbus City, Ind.

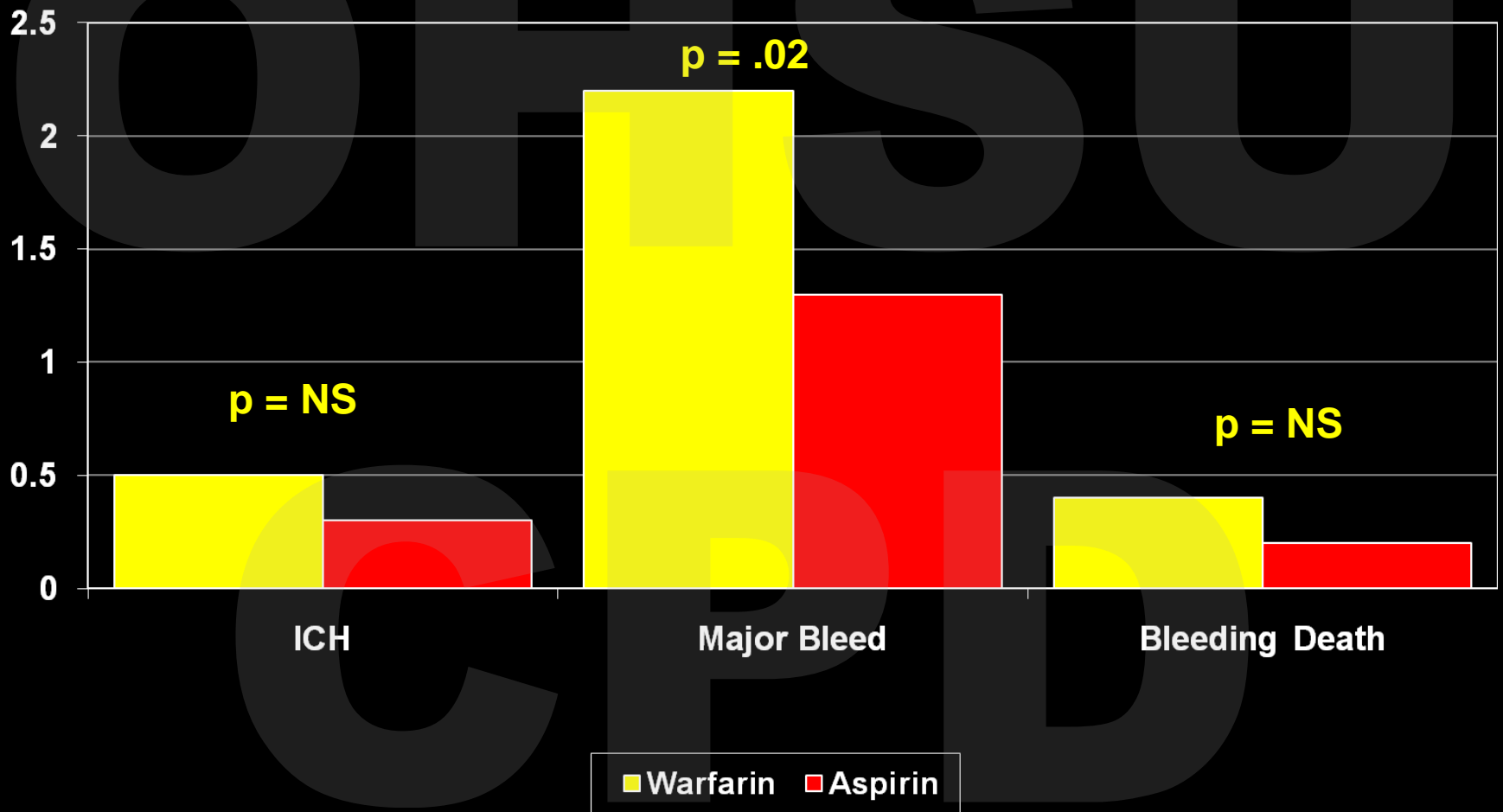
During the past year I have been employing **Ferro-Somatose** in a number of selected cases, with gratifying results in every case. In all cases of anemia in which there is a pronounced loss of hemoglobin, in cases of weakness and emaciation, so often found in neurasthenics, and following the acute infectious diseases, **Ferro-Somatose** has proven the remedy par excellence, improving the appetite, increasing the number of red blood corpuscles, and producing a rapid and well marked increase in weight. The following cases are of interest:

Summing up the experience of these five cases, **Ferro-Somatose** is certainly indicated in all cases of anemia, chlorosis, and in convalescence from acute infectious diseases. Care and judgment in selection of cases, with appropriate supplementary treatment, will be followed by gratifying results, and will give to **Ferro-Somatose** the first place in the list of chalybeate preparations.—*New Albany Medical Herald*, June, 1901.

Aspirin vs Warfarin

- No increase in ICH

Warfarin vs Aspirin



BAFTA

- N = 973
- **All** over 75 year of age (mean **81.5**)
- RCT
 - Warfarin 2-3 vs aspirin 81mg/day
 - f/u 2.7 years
- Lancet 2007; 370:493-503, 460-461

BAFTA: Bleeding Complications

End point	Warfarin	Aspirin	Hazard ratio (95% CI)
Major extracranial hemorrhage (%/yr)	1.4	1.6	0.87 (0.43–1.73)
All major hemorrhages (%/yr)	1.9	2.2	0.96 (0.53–1.75)

Mant JW et al. *Lancet* 2007; 370:493-503, 460-461.

Hazard Ratios For Bleeding Compared To Aspirin

Drug/combination	Adjusted hazard ratio	95% CI
Clopidogrel	1.33	1.11–1.59
VKA	1.23	0.94–1.61
Aspirin/clopidogrel	1.47	1.28–1.69
Aspirin/VKA	1.84	1.51–2.23
VKA/clopidogrel	3.52	2.42–5.11
VKA/clopidogrel/aspirin	4.05	3.08–5.33

Sørensen R et al. *Lancet* 2009; 374:1967-1974.

Aspirin vs Warfarin

- 52% reduction in ischemic stroke with warfarin
 - History of stroke ARR = 6%/yr
 - No history of stroke ARR = 1.2%/yr
 - Low risk of stroke ARR = 0.4%/yr
- 1.7 fold increase in hemorrhage
 - Absolute increase of 0.3%/yr

Aspirin and Stroke Severity

- Aspirin does not reduce risk of disabling stroke
 - 22% → 13% (NS)
- Warfarin does reduce **fatal** stroke
 - 0.5% → 0.2 events/yr

AHA Guidelines 2014

- **No** studies, with the exception of the SPAF (Stroke Prevention in Atrial Fibrillation)-1 trial, show benefit for aspirin alone in preventing stroke
- **Ineffective** in preventing strokes in those >75 years of age
- Did **not** prevent severe strokes
- Has **not** been studied in a population at low risk of AF
- **NOT** recommended

Aspirin vs Apixaban

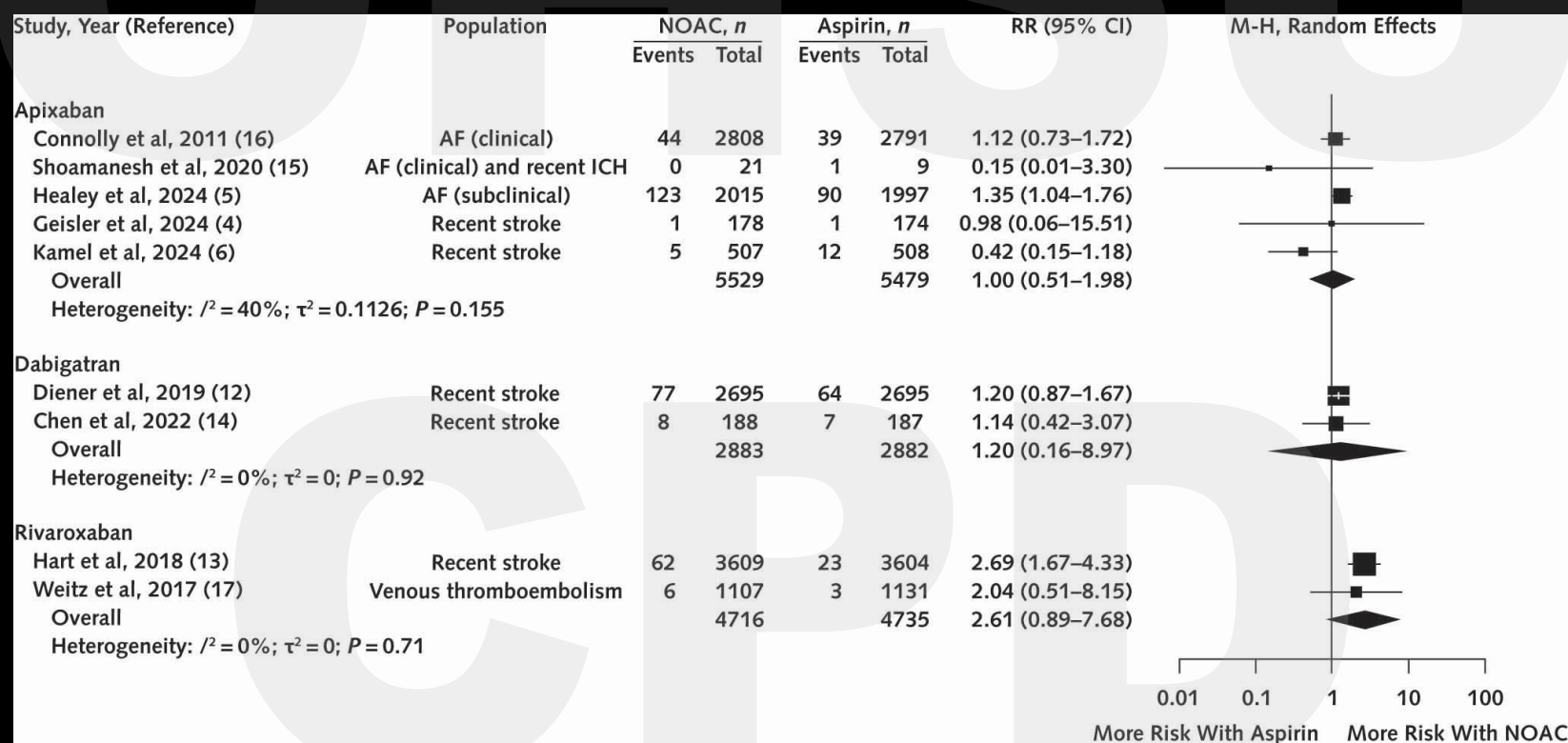
- RCT
 - Aspirin 81-324mg
 - Apixaban 5mg bid
- More effective than aspirin
 - RR **0.45** (0.32-0.62)
- Same risk of bleeding
 - RR **1.13** (0.74-2.05)
 - Intracranial hemorrhage **0.85** (0.38-1.90)

ASA vs Rivaroxaban

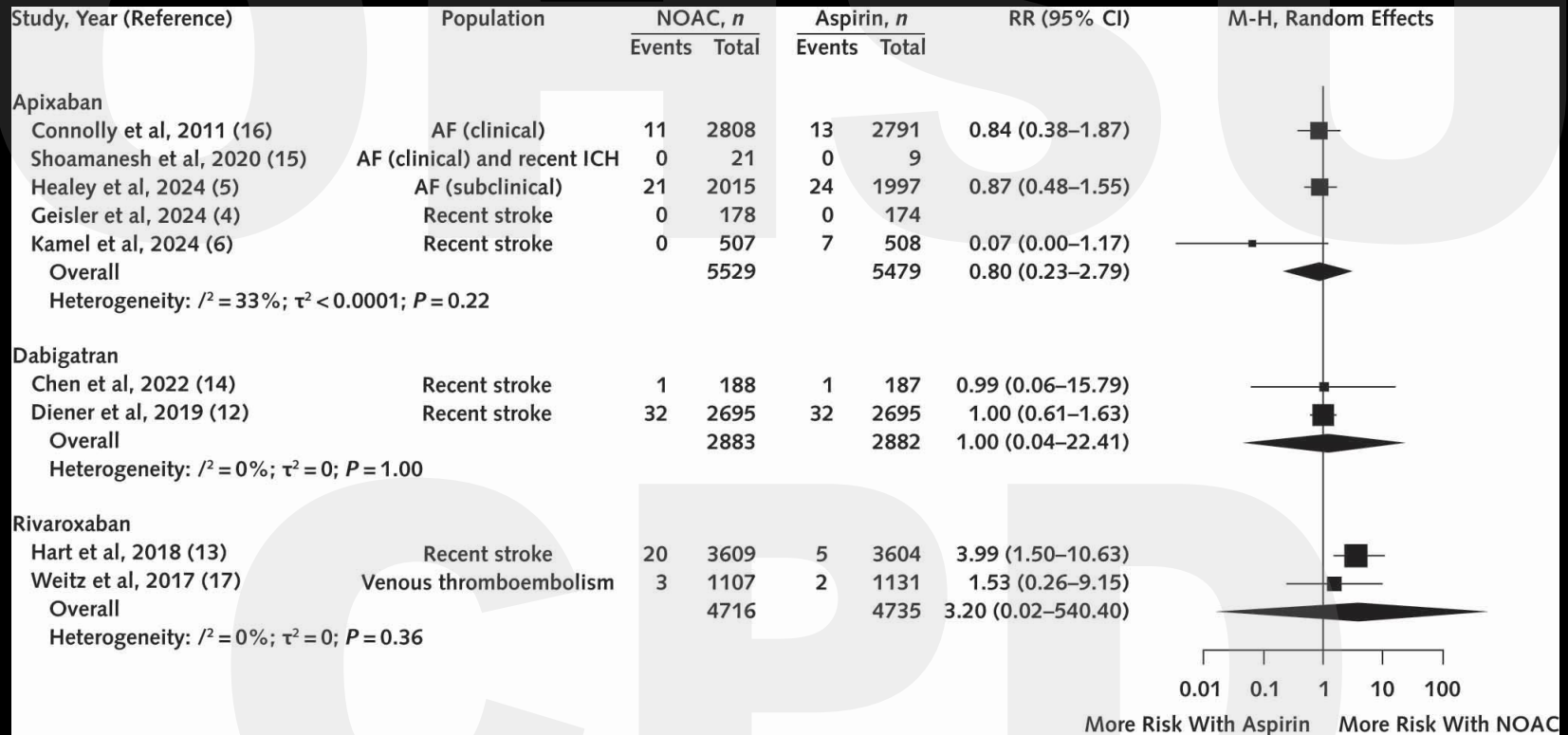
	Rivaroxaban 20mg (1107)	Rivaroxaban 10mg (1127)	Aspirin 100mg (1131)
Recurrent VTE	17 (1.5%)	13 (1.2%)	50 (4.4%)
Any Bleeding	196 (17.8%)	160 (14.2%)	143 (12.8%)
Major Bleeding	6 (0.5%)	5 (0.4%)	3 (0.3%)

N Engl J Med 2017; 376:1211-1222

Major Bleeding



ICH



Aspirin: Bottom Line

- **Limited to no effectiveness**
- **Not effective in older patients**
- **Not effective in preventing disabling strokes**
- **Less effective for DVT prevention 1° and 2°**
- **Not the safer choice**
- **Not recommended!**





Standard Heparin Is A Barbaric Relic Of An Ancient Era

- **LMWH**
 - **Better outcomes in inpatients**
 - **Faster to therapeutic levels**
 - **Less heparin induced thrombocytopenia**
 - **Can use in patients who may get procedures**

Meta-analysis of LMWH inpatient therapy

Recurrent DVT day 1-15

LMWH
3/365 (0.8)

SH
12/371 (3.2%) **RR 76%**

Recurrent DVT day 16 -90

LMWH
7/365 (1.9%)

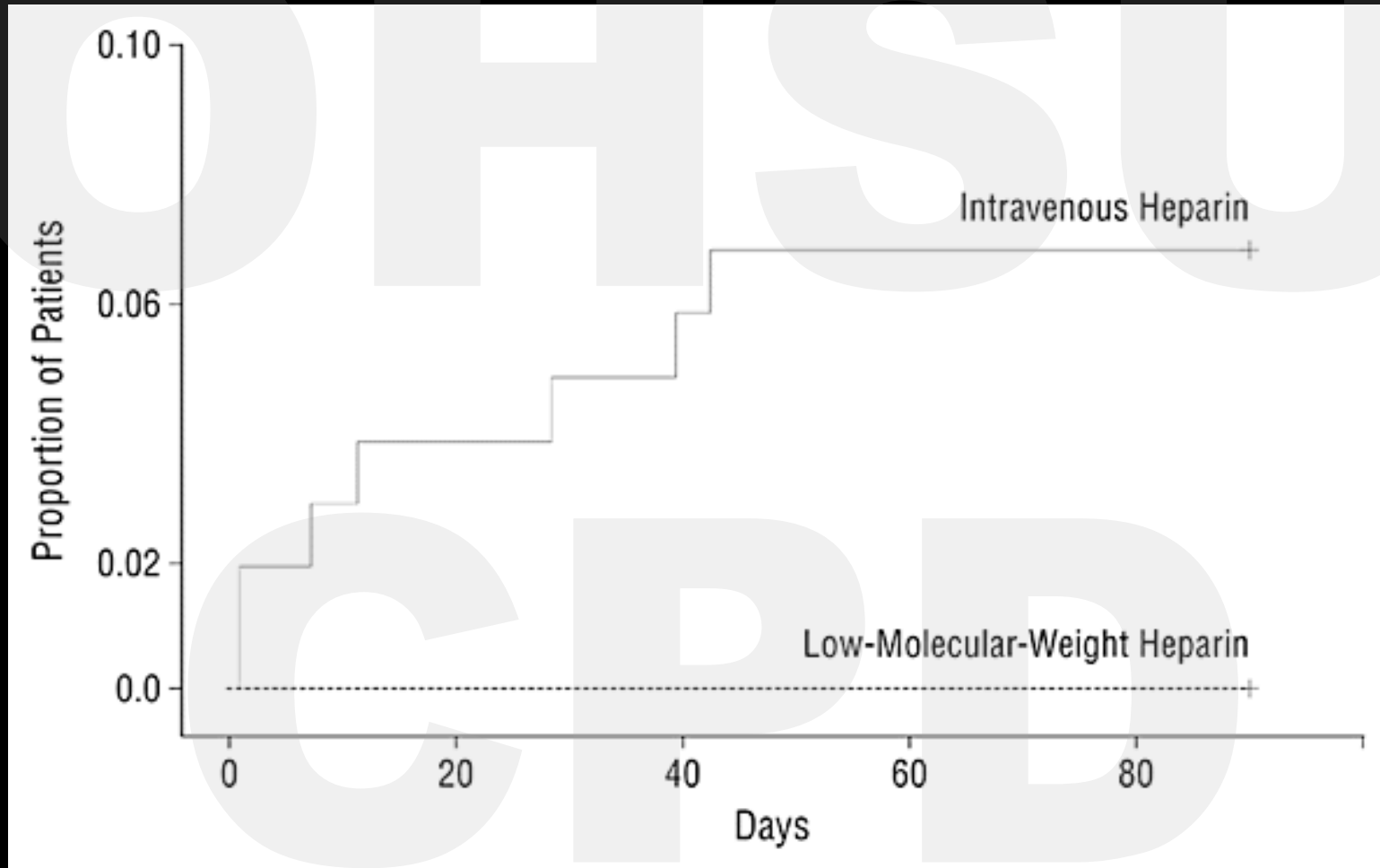
SH
12/371 (3.2%) **RR 61%**

Bleeding

LMWH
12/394 (3.0%)

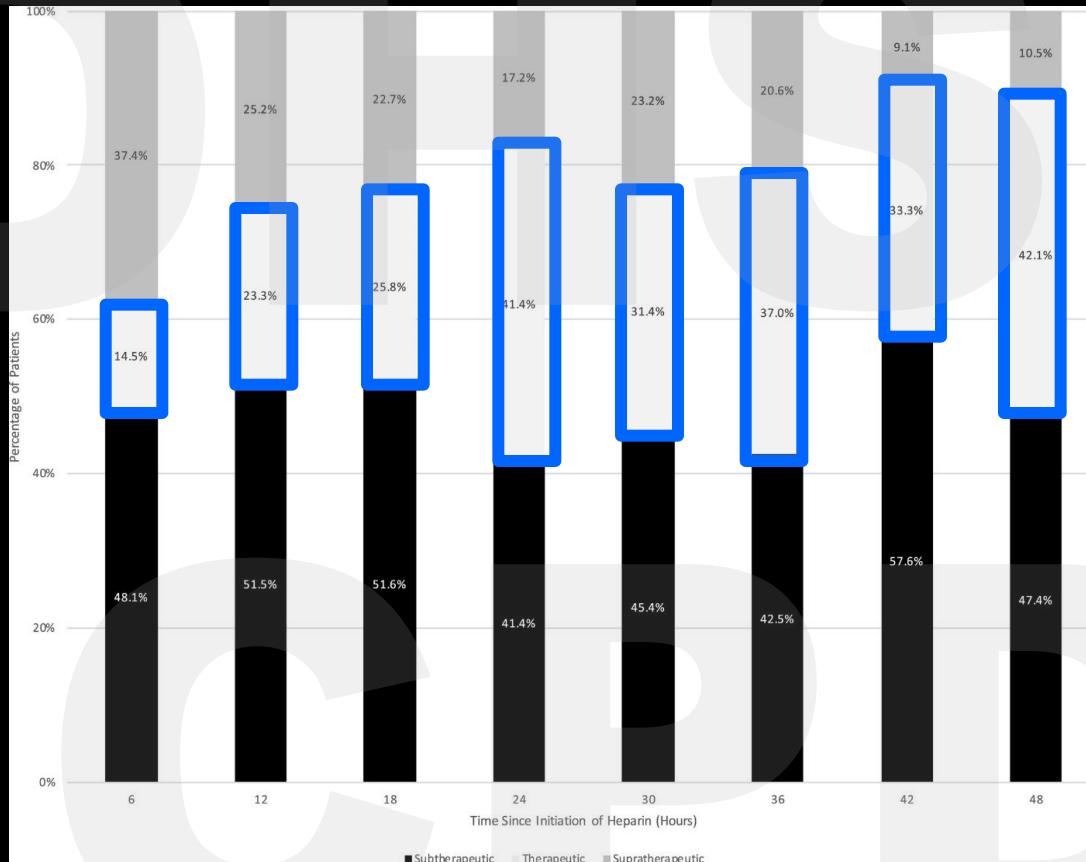
SH
27/402 (6.7%) **RR 58%**

LMWH vs UFH: Therapy of Pulmonary Embolism



Arch Intern Med. 2000;160(2):229-236

Analysis of PTT in Patients With PE First 48 Hours of Anticoagulation With UFH



PERT Consortium

Handbook of PE 2024

	Mortality	Acute recurrent VTE	Late recurrent VTE	Complications
Lensing et al. (1995)	Favors LMWH		Favors LMWH	Favors LMWH
Siragusa et al. (1996)	Favors LMWH	Favors LMWH	Favors LMWH	Favors LMWH
Gould et al. (1999)	Favors LMWH		Nonsignificant	Favors LMWH
Dolovich et al. (2000)	Favors LMWH		Nonsignificant	Nonsignificant
Quinlan et al. (2004)		Nonsignificant	Nonsignificant	Nonsignificant
Castellucci et al. (2014)			Favors LMWH	Nonsignificant
Robertson and Jones (2017)	Nonsignificant	Favors LMWH	Favors LMWH	Favors LMWH

Low molecular weight heparin is **preferred** due to an increasing body of evidence suggesting **lower** rates of thromboembolism recurrence and **lower** rates of hemorrhagic events in patients treated with low molecular weight heparin compared to unfractionated heparin

LMWH

- Can be used before procedures
- Can be used patients with renal issues
- No issues in pregnancy

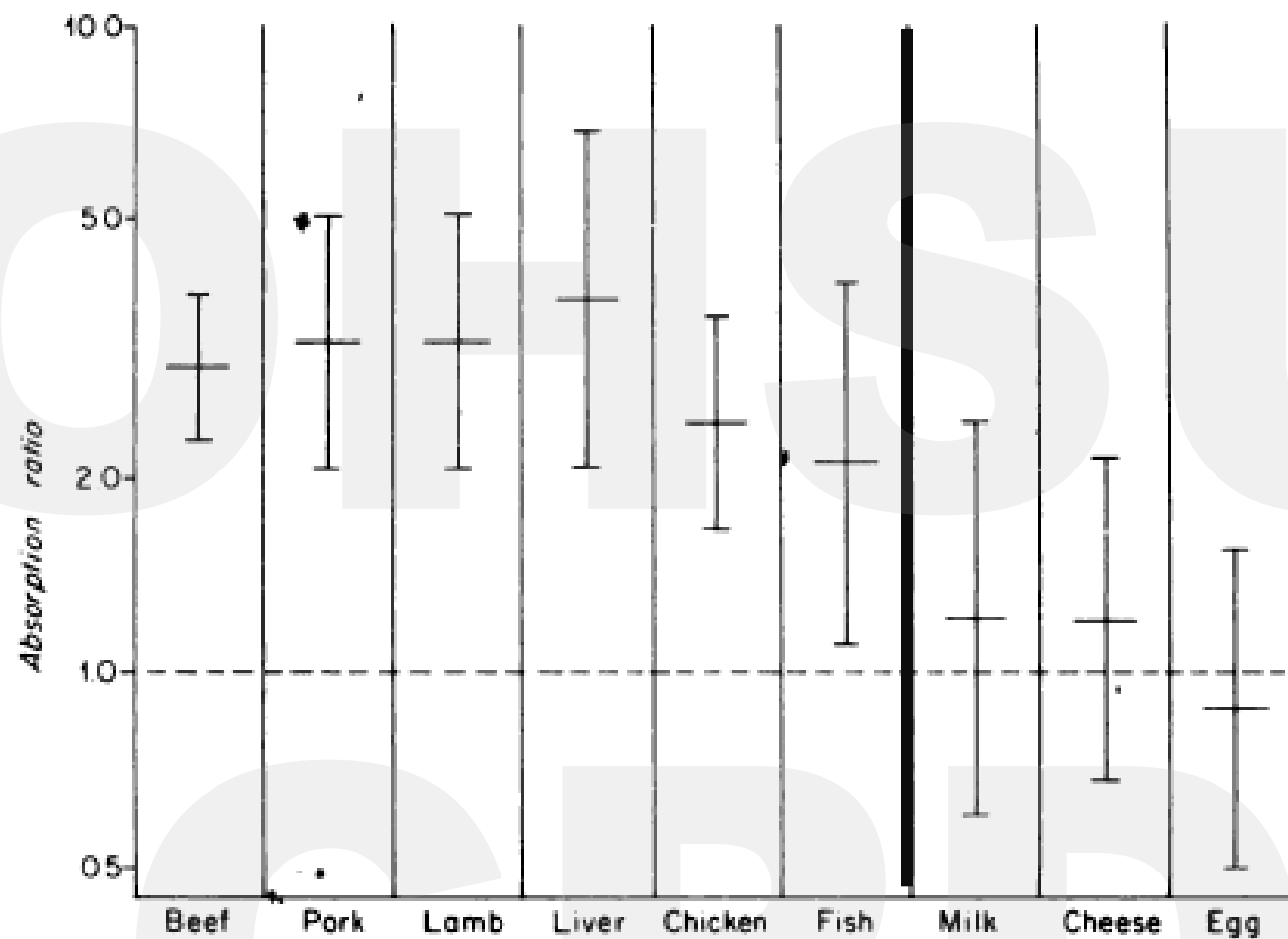


Iron

- TID? Every day? Every other day?

Dietary Iron

- Heme iron 10x better absorbed than non-heme iron
- Meat protein improves iron absorption



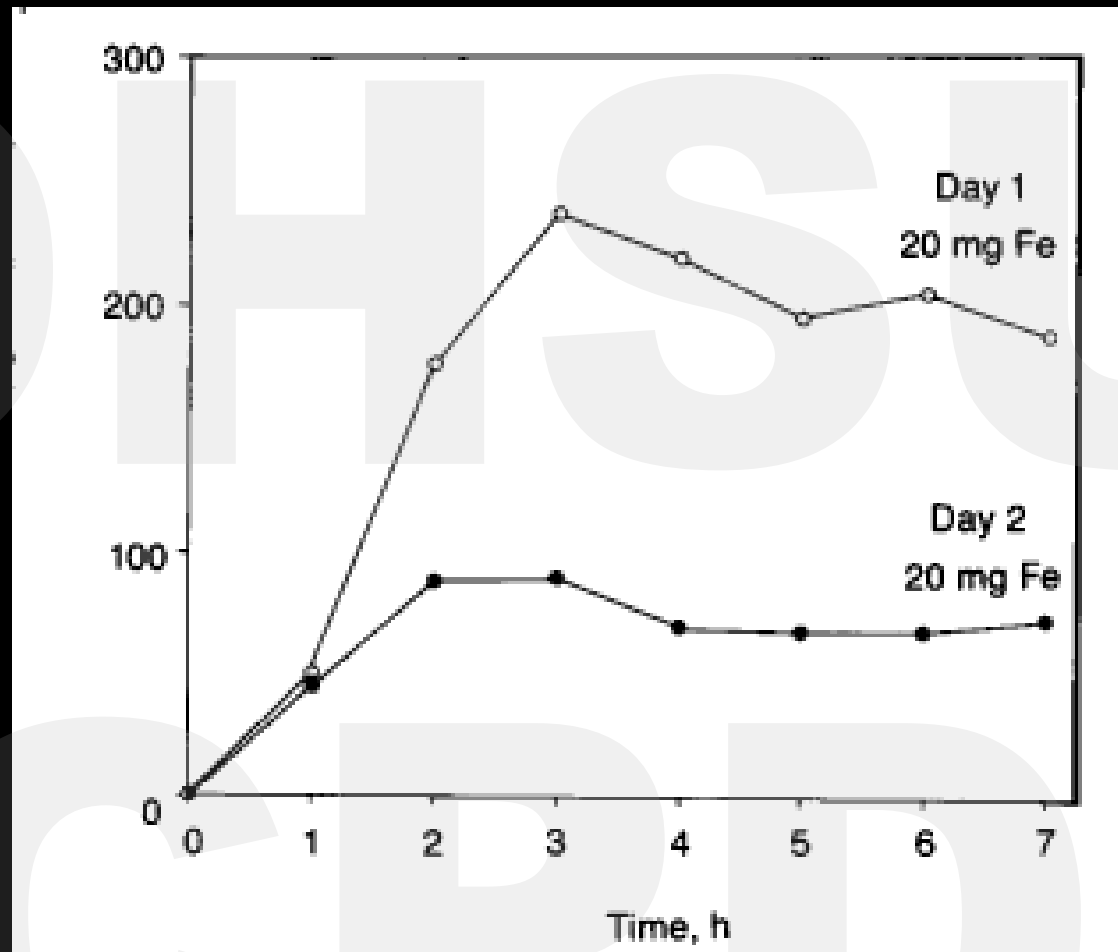
Am J Clin Nutr **August**
1976 vol. 29 no. 8
859-867

Dietary Iron

- Calcium, fiber can block iron absorption
 - Overcome by vitamin C
- Tea decreases 75-80%
- Coffee decreases 60% (5 oz!)

Oral Iron Pills

- Gut can only absorb a limited amount of iron
- Maxed out at ~ 10mg

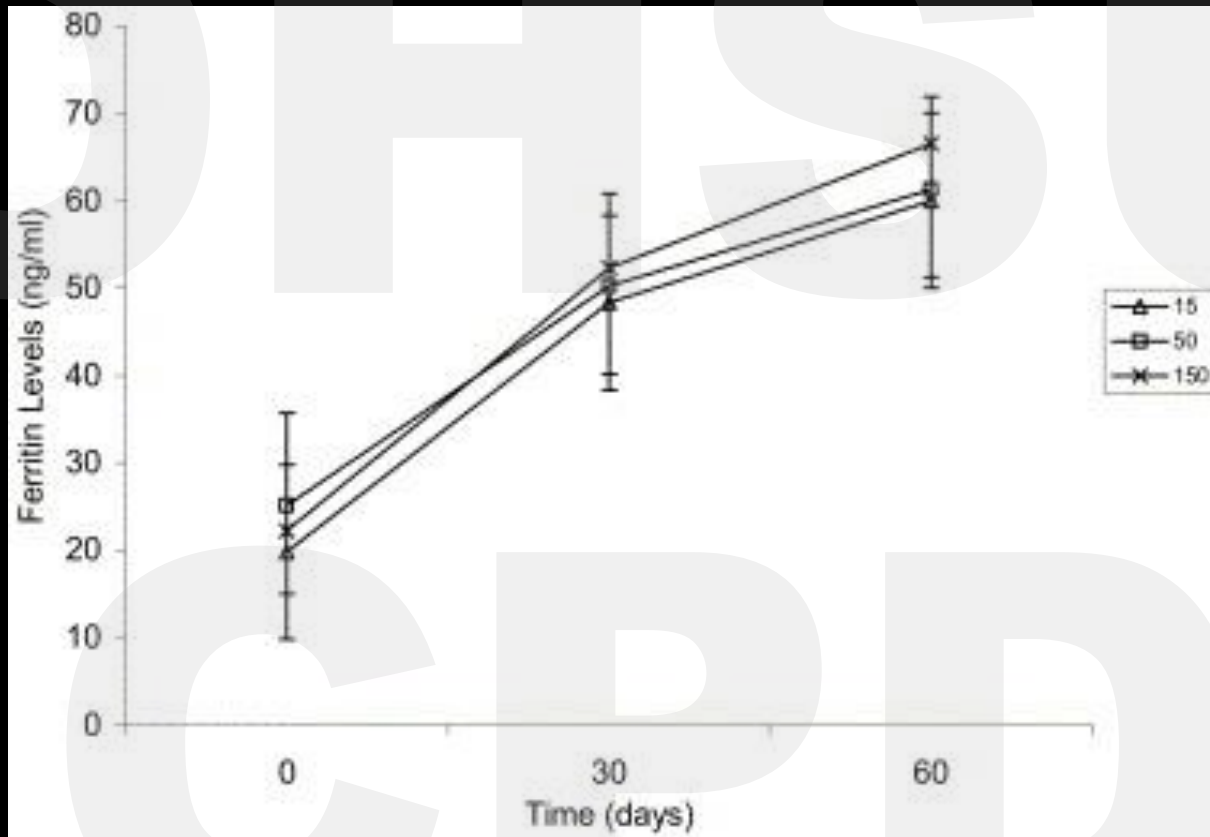


(Arch Intern Med 1987;147:489-491)

Hepcidin Response to Iron



15 vs 50 vs 150mg Oral Iron



Am J Med. 2005 Oct;118(10):1142-7.

Does Alternate-Day Dosing of Oral Iron Therapy Improve Iron Absorption?



Allan S. Brett, MD, reviewing Stoffel NU et al. *Lancet Haematol* 2017 Oct 9

Daily Dosing 14 days

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

16%

Fractional
Absorption

131 mg

Total
Absorption

Alternate-Day Dosing 28 days

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
○		○		○		○
	○		○		○	
○		○		○		○
	○		○		○	

21%

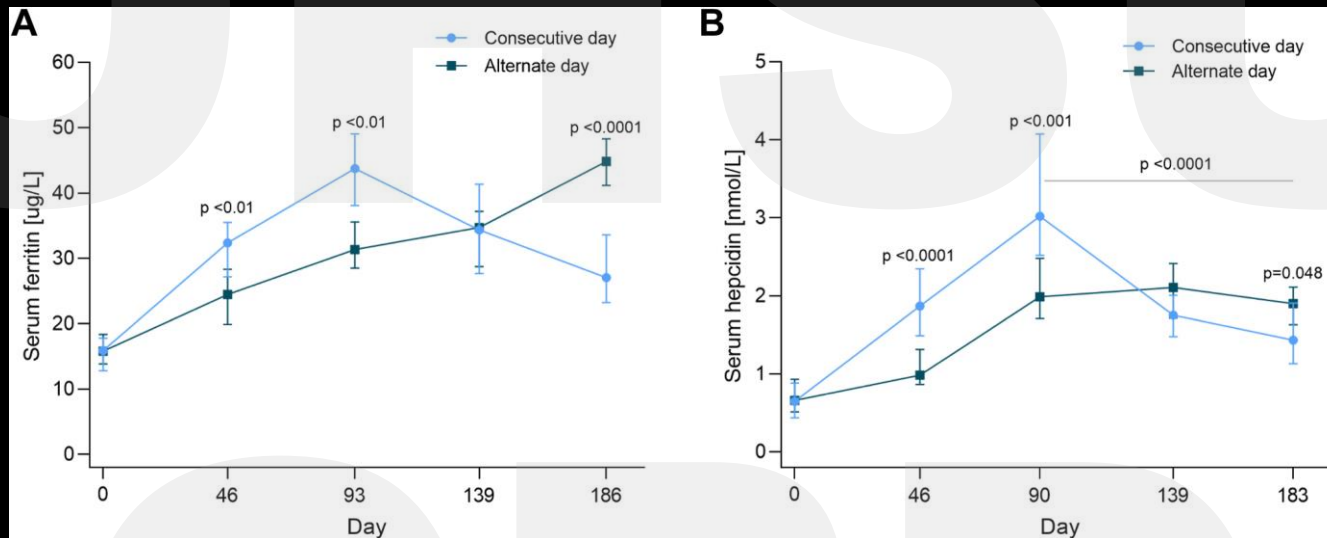
175 mg

Comment: Fractional absorption was better with alternate-day dosing, but total absorption would still have been better with daily dosing if that group had received 28 days of iron. Alternate-day dosing likely enhanced gastrointestinal tolerability.

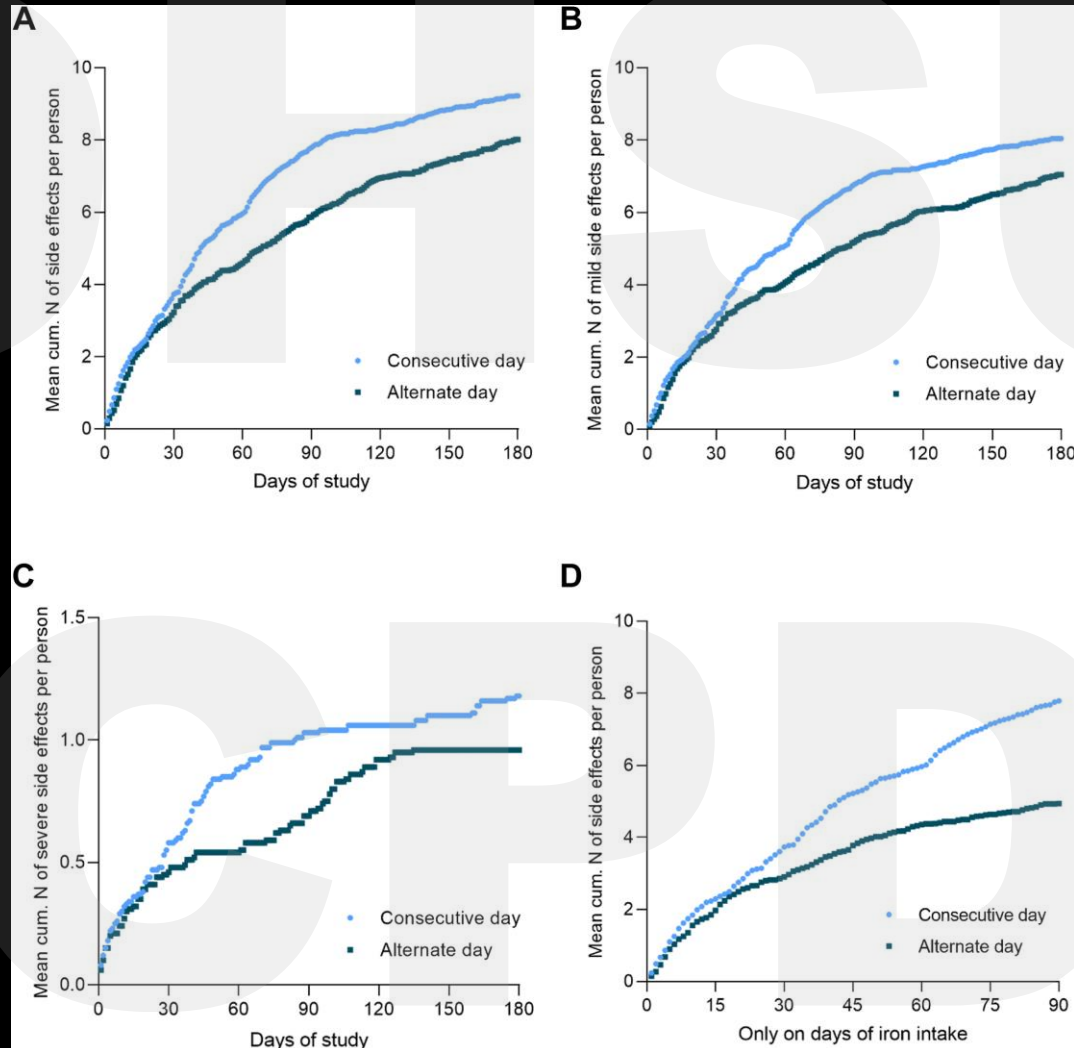
NEJM
Journal Watch

But 28 days of daily iron = **262** mg absorbed

Every day vs Every Other Day



Every day vs Every Other Day



Alternate Day Iron

- Summary of studies
- Ever day faster improvement
- Every other day better tolerated

Oral Iron Pills

- Years of studies have shown that the best iron preparation is.....

Oral Iron Pills

....the one that the patient can tolerate

- No consistent difference in any brand
- Many patients can't tolerate any pill on an empty stomach
 - Ok with meals

What I Do

- **Cheapest iron pill**
 - Ferrous sulfate
- **Once a day with meals**
 - Vitamin C 500
 - No tea or coffee for one hour after
- **If intolerant can try lower dose**



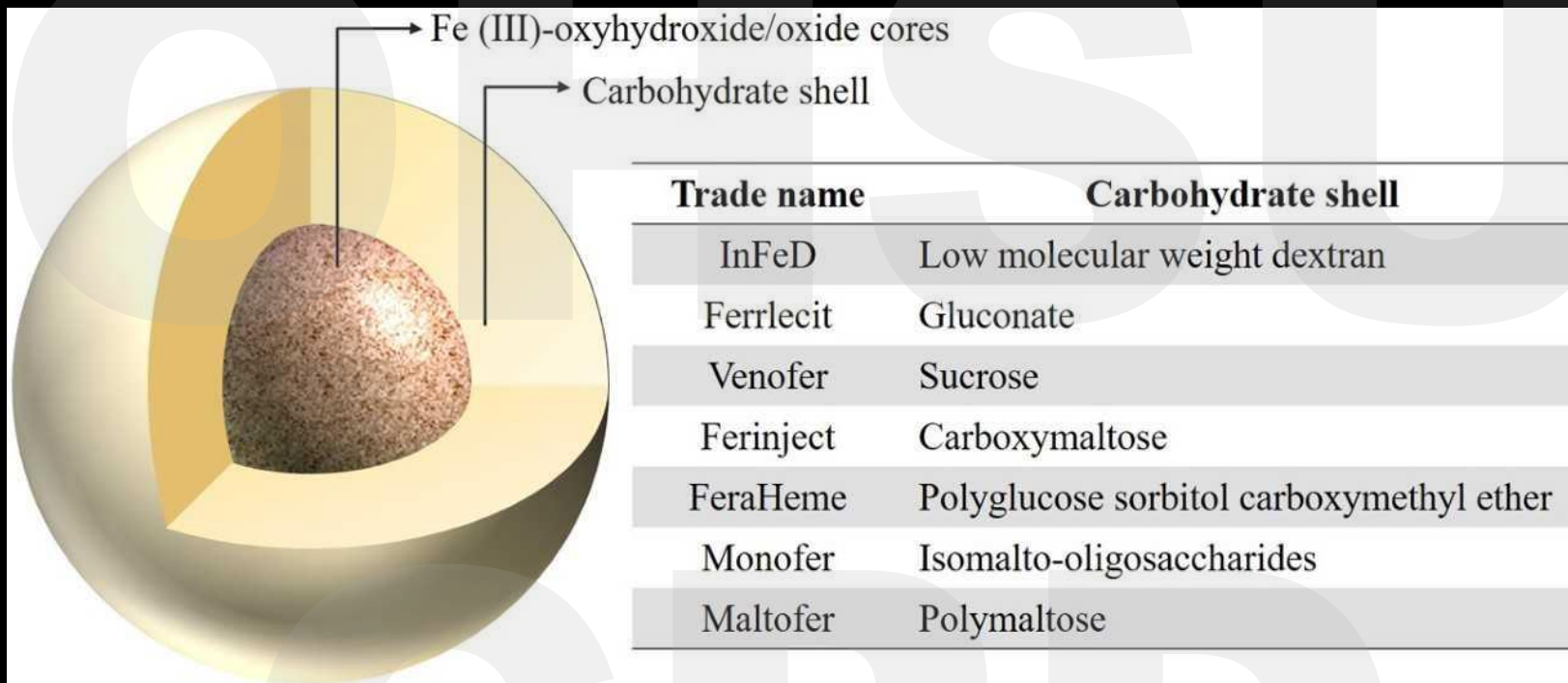
OHSU

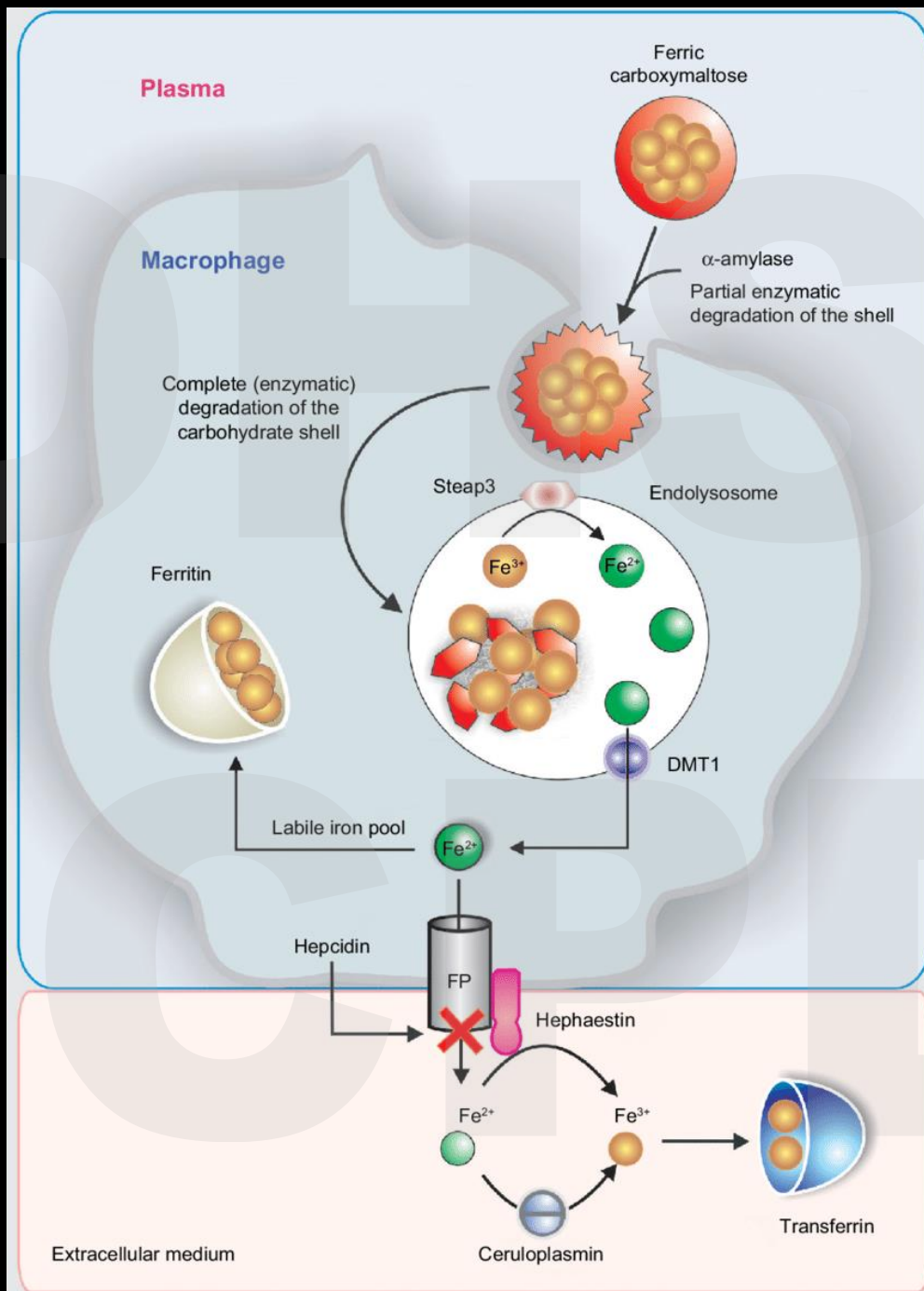
I am allergic to IV iron..

CPD

What is IV Iron

- Free iron very toxic
- IV iron preparation “coated” with carbohydrate
- Uptaken by macrophages to increase iron stores





IV Iron: Preparations

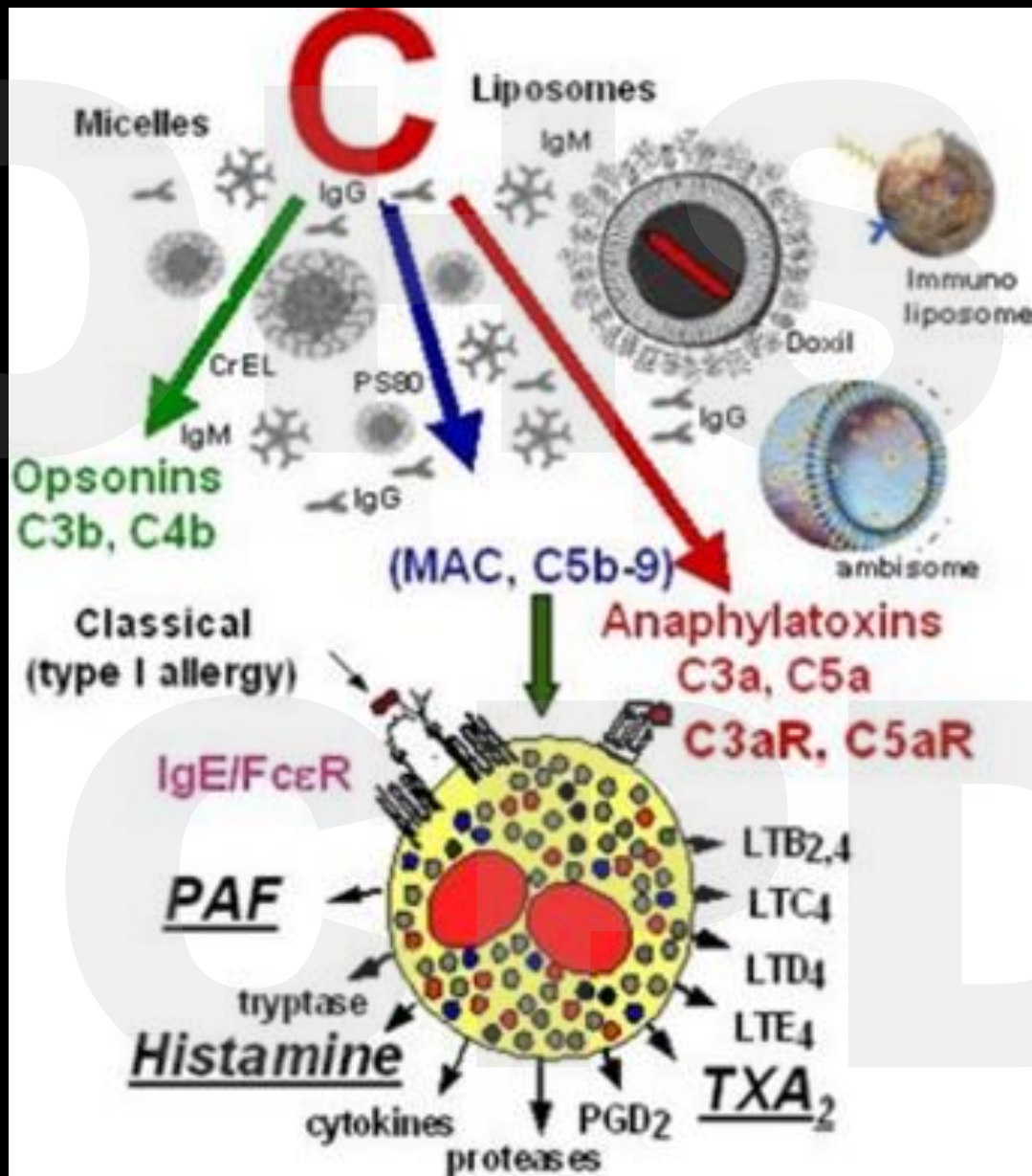
- **Iron MW Iron Dextran: INFeD**
- **Iron Sucrose: Venofer**
- **Ferric Gluconate: Ferrlecit**
- **Ferumoxytol: FeraHeme**
- **Ferric Carboxymaltose: Injectafer**
- **Ferric Derisomaltose: Monoferric**

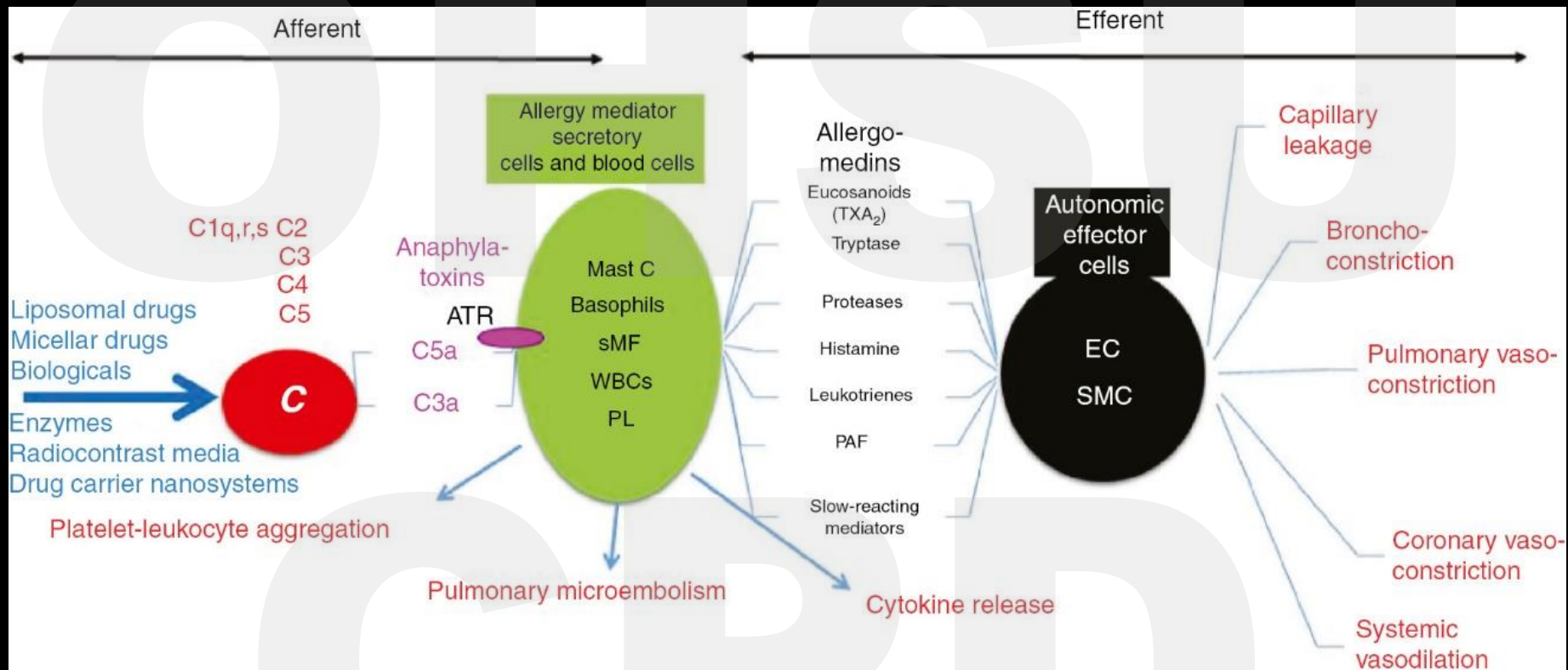
Iron Salts

- **Ferric Gluconate (Ferrlecit)**
- **Iron Sucrose (Venofer)**
- **Need multiple doses!**
- **Higher levels of labile iron**
- **Best for dialysis/EPO**

Reactions

- Complement mediated pseudo-allergy
- Drug nonspecifically activates complement
 - Similar to rituximab etc.
- True anaphylaxis very rare
 - Negative tryptase > 300 reactions





Implication

- No value test dose
- Premedication often doesn't help
 - Diphenhydramine makes things worse
- Treat as infusion reaction not allergy
- Studies show risk same with all iron preparations

Mild HSR

itching, flushing,
urticaria, sensation of
heat, slight chest
tightness, hypertension,
back/ joint pains

Management

Stop iron infusion for ≥ 15
mins
Inform doctor
Monitor pulse, BP, resp
rate, O2 saturation
Wait and watch

Patient better

Restart iron
infusion at
reduced rate
(eg 50%)

Symptoms recur

Stop iron infusion
Manage as above
Document event

Moderate HSR

As in **Mild reaction** + transient
cough, flushing, chest tightness,
nausea, shortness of breath,
urticaria, tachycardia,
hypotension

Treat as for mild reaction AND

Stop iron infusion
Call doctor
Consider volume load (eg iv
0.9% saline 500ml), iv
corticosteroid (eg
hydrocortisone 200mg)

**Patient no
better in
5-10 mins, or
deteriorating**

**Patient
deteriorating**

Patient well

Observe for $\geq 1-4$ hr
Document event
Consider future
treatment strategy

Severe/life-threatening HSR

Sudden onset and rapid
aggravation of symptoms +
wheezing/stridor,
periorbital edema,
cyanosis, loss of
consciousness,
cardiac/respiratory arrest

Treat as in moderate reaction AND

Call fast response team
Stop iron infusion
Adrenaline im (0.5mg 1/1000)
or iv (0.1mg 1/10000)
Nebulised B2 agonist
Further isotonic volume load
iv corticosteroid
O2 face mask
ACLS (if necessary)

Patient no better

Transfer quickly to
intensive care unit

Safety

- **Minor infusion reactions common (~1-2%) but true anaphylaxis very rare**
- **Death rates (per 100,000 Medicare)**
 - **INFeD 0.8 (0-1.9)**
 - **Ferrlecit 6.3 (1.3 -1.4)**
 - **Venofer 6.6 (3.1-9)**
 - **FeraHeme 3.5 (0-7.8)**

OHSU Data

- 35,737 infusions
- 77.5% women
- JAMA Network Open. 2022;5(3):e224488.
doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.4488

OHSU Data (Any Reaction %)

- **LMW Iron Dextran** 3.8
- **Ferric Carboxymaltose** 1.4
- **Iron Sucrose** 4.3
- **Ferumoxytol** 1.8
- **Severe reactions: 1:15,000
infusions**

OHSU Reactions

- Premedication no-value
 - Very confounded
- Test dose no value
- Allergy history predicted reactions

Infections

- RCT show no long term infection risk with IV iron
- Unease giving in acute infection but no data
 - Give when on ATB

Intravenous iron dosing and infection risk in hemodialysis patients: a pre-specified secondary analysis of the PIVOTAL trial

METHODS



Median: 264 mg/mo Median: 145 mg/mo



During infection
(investigator judgment)

RESULTS

Median follow-up 2.1 years

	Proactive high-dose		Reactive low-dose	
	46.5%	HR: 0.98 <i>p</i> =0.80	45.5%	Any infection (first event)
	29.6%	HR: 0.99 <i>p</i> =0.92	29.3%	Hospitalization for infection (first event)
	4.21%	HR: 1.04 <i>p</i> =0.84	3.91%	Death from infection (first event)
Risk of a first cardiovascular event was strongly associated with an infection-related event in the prior 30 days				
			HR: 2.83; <i>p</i><0.0001	
			HR: 2.74; <i>p</i>=0.0006	

CONCLUSION A proactive, higher dosing IV iron protocol did not affect infection incidence in a large HD population.

doi: 10.1681/ASN.2019090972

JASN
JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF NEPHROLOGY

Our Approach

- 1000mg of LMWID over one hour
- Test ferritin in one month
- Goal > 50ng/dl (100ng/dl)
- Monitor every 3-4 months

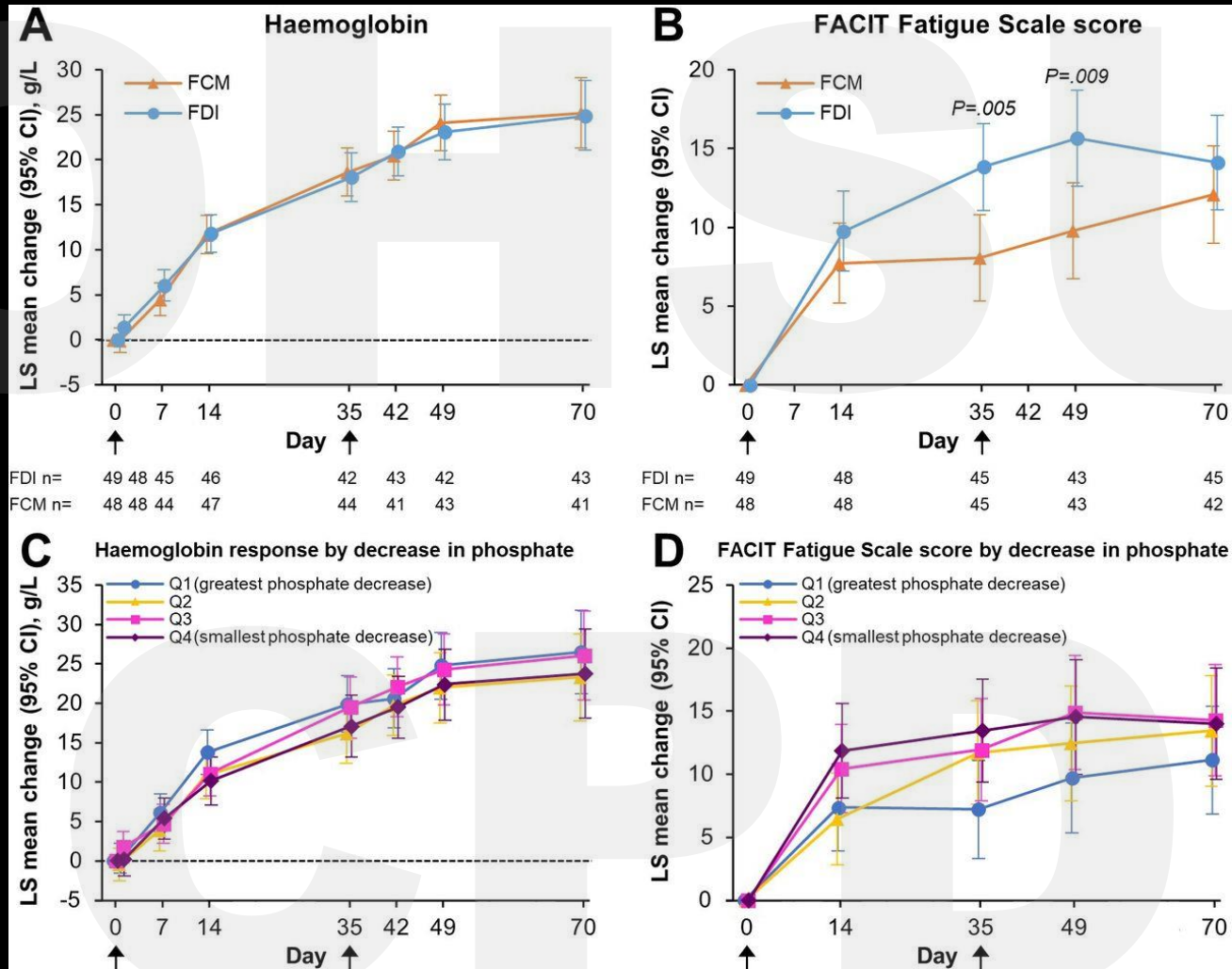
IV Iron Dosing

Formulation	Recommended Dose
LMW Iron dextran (InFed)	1000mg over 1 hr
Ferumoxytol (FeraHeme)	510 x 2 or 1020 over 15 min
Ferric carboxymaltose (Injectifer)	1000mg over 15 min or 750 mg x 2
Iron isomaltoside (Monoheme)	1-2000 mg over 15 min

Ferric Carboxymaltose

- High incidence hypophosphatemia
- <2.0 mg/dl: 50.8%: <1.3 mg/dl, 10.0%
- Associated with fatigue
- No longer first line therapy

Changes from baseline in haemoglobin and FACIT Fatigue Scale score, according to intravenous iron treatment (A, B), and by serum phosphate quartiles (C, D).



Heinz Zoller et al. Gut 2023;72:644-653

