LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

doi:10.1093/eurheartj/ehp095
Online publish-ahead-of-print 1 April 2009

Hotline sessions of the 30th European Congress of Cardiology

I read with interest the summary of the hotline sessions of this year’s ESC Congress provided by Bergman et al.1 The paper discusses the results of the F.I.R.E. study, which investigated the effect of a new drug, FX06 (fibrin-derived peptide B15-42), for the prevention of ischaemia/reperfusion injury in the setting of acute STEMI, which we presented at hotline III. We think that the conclusion given in the EHJ that FX06 failed to significantly reduce reperfusion injury parameters in this STEMI population does not provide a fair judgement to the interesting results obtained in this trial.

There is ample evidence from the literature that even small reductions in permanently damaged myocardium measured acutely after STEMI have the potential to provide sustained benefit for patients.2 This has been specifically demonstrated for microvascular obstruction by several groups, who found this parameter to be an independent predictor of long-term patient outcome.3,4 In this context, the reduction of the mass of unrecoverable myocardium by >50% is a very remarkable finding. It should also be noted that both the incidence and extent of microvascular obstructions trended lower in FX06-treated patients, even though the difference did not reach statistical significance. Interestingly, there were also trends in favour of FX06 in cardiac events, including cardiac death and new onset heart failure, which are encouraging and warrant further investigation in larger trials.

We would also like to put the apparent lack of difference to placebo in scar mass measured at 4 months into perspective. Patients were followed for 4 months primarily for safety reasons, looking for cardiac death or new onset heart failure, which are encouraging and warrant further investigation in larger trials.

In summary, we would like to emphasize that the F.I.R.E. study as an exploratory trial provided a very consistent set of data suggesting a cardioprotective role of FX06 achieved by a reduction of ischaemia/reperfusion injury. The full study results have just been published.5

References

Dan Atar
Division of Cardiology
Aker University Hospital and Faculty of Medicine
University of Oslo
Norway
Tel: +47 23 033 125
Fax: +47 22 894 721
Email: dan.atar@online.no