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Racecadotril: An effective anti-diarrheal drug

It is well known that 2.5 million gastroenteritis deaths occur each year in children less than 5 years of age throughout the world, mainly in developing countries. For this reason acute gastro-enteritis remains a major public health problem in children with considerable costs both for families and public health organizations. Oral rehydration solutions (ORS) remain central to therapy; this may turn into an additional benefit in limiting hospitalizations. Despite this, we do not have a specific therapy for acute gastroenteritis so far, but we can only try to prevent and cure dehydration with oral rehydration solutions, or in serious cases, by using parenteral route. Therefore we need drugs with demonstrated efficacy and possibly good safety and tolerability for better preventing and treating the alterations related to gastroenteritis. Racecadotril inhibits pathological, but not basal, gut secretion without changing gastrointestinal transit time or motility. It is a low potent inhibitor of neutral endopeptidase (NEP) that, after oral administration, is quickly metabolized to thiorphan, a potent NEP inhibitor, which does not cross the blood-brain barrier. Its safety and tolerability are well established by meta-analysis and clinical studies; they are consistently similar to that with placebo and similar or significantly less frequent than that with loperamide. Furthermore the adjunct of Racecadotril to ORS was shown cost-effectiveness compared to ORS alone for the treatment of children with acute gastroenteritis. Many studies and a recent meta-analysis show that Racecadotril reduces duration of hospitalization and number of visits to GP.

Biography

Marco Manfredi is a Pediatrician and Gastroenterologist, carried out his education at Parma University where he has completed his PhD in Pediatric Gastroenterology in 2004. Currently he is an Adjunct Professor at "Pietro Barilla" Children's Hospital in Parma, Italy. His main fields of interests are *Helicobacter pylori* infection, coeliac disease, gastrointestinal infectious diseases and Probiotics. He has published more than 70 papers, included chapters of textbooks. He is the Editor of three textbooks titled "*Helicobacter pylori* infection: Detection Methods, Diseases and Health Implications", "*Gastrointestinal Endoscopy in Children*" and "*Probiotics in Children*" published by Nova Science Publishers, New York, USA. He is serving as an Editorial Board Member of several reputed journal like "Clinical Microbiology: open access" and "*Frontiers in Pediatric Gastroenterology and Hepatology*" and expert Reviewer for journals like *BMC Gastroenterology*, *Saudi Journal of Gastroenterology* and *BMC Case Reports*. He is a Member of Italian Society of Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition.

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