

Clinical Characteristics of Pediatric Pulmonary Hypertension: Results from the global registry Tracking Outcomes and Practice in Pediatric Pulmonary Hypertension (TOPP)

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Introduction

Pediatric and adult pulmonary hypertension (PH) share similar pathology and clinical characteristics yet several features appear different. However, pediatric data are lacking. TOPP, a global, observational study, provides demographic, clinical and treatment patterns in pediatric PH.

Methods

Consecutive patients are screened and consenting patients with PH (mean pulmonary artery pressure [mPAP] ≥ 25 mmHg, pulmonary capillary wedge pressure ≤ 12 mmHg and pulmonary vascular resistance index [PVRI] > 3 WU.m²) are enrolled at 31 centers in 20 countries.

Results

Of 456 patients (age at diagnosis < 18 yrs), enrolled between January 2008 and February 2010, 362 had confirmed PH. Of the PH-confirmed patients, median age at diagnosis was 7 yrs with a female preponderance (1.4:1). Mean time from symptom onset to diagnosis (17 mos; 95%CI 14-20 mos) was shorter than reported in adults. The majority (88%) had Group 1 PH: pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH), of which 57% had idiopathic or familial PAH (IPAH/FPAH) and 43% had PAH associated with other conditions (APAH). Of the APAH patients, 85% had associated congenital heart disease (CHD). The remaining children (12%) had PH associated with lung diseases and/or hypoxemia, with bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD) the most frequent association. Co-morbid conditions, including chromosomal abnormalities, other syndromes and anomalies, were reported in 24%. As in adults, dyspnea and fatigue were the most frequent presenting symptoms. In contrast to adult PH, syncope was reported frequently, especially in children with IPAH/FPAH (31%) or repaired CHD (18%); in contrast, no children with unrepaired/residual shunts had syncope reported. Functional class (FC) at diagnosis was predominantly FC II (12%/51%/30%/7%, I/II/III/IV, respectively) consistent with preserved right heart function despite severe PAH, i.e. mPAP (58 ± 19 mmHg) and PVRI (16 ± 10 WU.m²).

Conclusions

TOPP demonstrates that pediatric PH has important characteristics that differ from adults, including syncope as a frequent presenting symptom in IPAH/FPAH despite preserved cardiac output. Additionally, the distribution of etiologies, the occurrence of specific associated pediatric conditions, including BPD and a high rate of co-morbidities appear different than in adults. As we track outcomes in these children, we hope to define prognostic parameters for risk stratification to guide therapeutic approaches in pediatric PH.