

## Dalteparin sodium and heparin: similar long-term mortality

In the long term, patients with deep vein thrombosis (DVT) treated with dalteparin sodium or heparin have similar mortality, severity of post-thrombotic syndrome and venous thromboembolism (VTE) recurrence rates, report researchers from Sweden.

They conducted a long-term follow-up of 265 patients who had participated in 1 of 3 studies in which they had received SC or IV dalteparin sodium (n = 180), or IV heparin, for  $\geq 5$  days for the treatment of DVT in a lower extremity.\* The follow-up was done  $\geq 5$  years after treatment with dalteparin sodium or heparin.

### No significant differences

The median post-thrombotic score was 2 in both groups (of a maximum possible score of 8).\*\* There were no significant differences between dalteparin sodium and heparin recipients in the proportion of patients who developed a leg ulcer (3.9 vs 4.8% of patients, respectively), recurrent VTE (28.6 vs 23.5% of patients, respectively) or cancer (16.2 vs 11.8% of patients, respectively).

There was also no significant between-group difference in thrombosis-free survival.

The researchers point out that '*no difference in overall mortality or mortality related to malignant disease was observed between the two treatment groups*'.

\* Patients also received oral anticoagulants starting on day 1 or 2, continuing for  $\geq 3$  months for most patients.

\*\* The post-thrombotic score was based on the presence of the following signs and symptoms: pain; the feeling of heaviness; swelling of the thigh, calf and/or ankle; telangiectasia or varicose veins; hyperpigmentation; and leg ulcers.

Holmström M, Åberg W, Lockner D, Paul C. Long-term clinical follow-up in 265 patients with deep venous thrombosis initially treated with either unfractionated heparin or dalteparin: a retrospective analysis. *Thrombosis and Haemostasis* 82: 1222-1226, Oct 1999

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