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CONTACT: Andrew Crosby
(901) 575-0010
acrosby@crosbyvolmer.com
Amy Murphy
(202) 375-6476
amurphy@acc.org
ACC.08 Newsroom:
(312) 949-3450

NOVEL AGENT PROMISING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE HEART FAILURE SYNDROMES

CHICAGO, Il –Istaroxime, a novel agent with both inotropic and lusitropic properties, increased the pumping action of the heart without decreasing blood pressure or increasing heart rate in patients with acute heart failure syndromes (AHFS), according to a study presented today at the American College of Cardiology's 57th Annual Scientific Session (ACC.08). ACC.08 is the premier cardiovascular medical meeting, bringing together cardiologists and cardiovascular specialists to further breakthroughs in cardiovascular medicine.

Patients with AHFS often require a drug called an inotrope that can increase the failing heart's pumping capacity. Currently, inotropes increase pump function, but also decrease blood pressure, and, therefore, blood supply to the heart, which is particularly dangerous in patients with coronary artery disease.

In this study, known as the HORIZON-HF trial, 120 patients admitted to hospital with AHFS were given initial therapy to stabilize their condition and then were randomized to a six-hour infusion of placebo (n=31) or to 3 different doses of istaroxime as follows: 0.5 mcg/kg/min (n=29); 1.0 mcg/kg/min (n=30); or 1.5 mcg/kg/min (n=30).

All doses of istaroxime lowered pulmonary capillary wedge pressure, and the highest dose decreased left ventricular end-diastolic volume (the heart size at the end of a pumping cycle), increased E-wave deceleration time (a measurement of the heart's relaxation ability), and increased cardiac index (the heart's pumping ability) compared with placebo. These changes were associated with increases in systolic blood pressure and decreases in heart rate. The drug appeared to be safe and well-tolerated.

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"The findings are very simple, promising, but not conclusive," said lead author Mihai Gheorghiade, M.D., Professor of Medicine and Surgery at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Associate Chief of the Division of Cardiology, and Chief of the Cardiology Clinical Service and Telemetry at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago. "It appears that this agent will increase both the pumping effect and the vacuum effect of the heart. Importantly, in contrast to other agents, it will actually increase the blood pressure when it is needed. It potentially fills a gap that currently exists in the management of acute heart failure, since all other available agents will not increase but have a tendency to decrease blood pressure."

Dr. Gheorghiade will present this study, "Hemodynamic, Echocardiographic, and Neurohormonal Effects of Istaroxime, a Novel Inotropic Agent With Lusitropic Properties, in Acute Heart Failure Syndromes (HORIZON-HF)," on Tuesday, April 1 at 2:15p.m. in North Hall B1.

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The American College of Cardiology (www.acc.org) represents the majority of board certified cardiovascular physicians in the United States. Its mission is to advocate for quality cardiovascular care through education, research, promotion, development and application of standards and guidelines- and to influence health care policy. ACC.08 is the largest cardiovascular meeting, bringing together cardiologists and cardiovascular specialists to share the newest discoveries in treatment and prevention, while helping the ACC achieve its mission to address and improve issues in cardiovascular medicine.