

Cladribine (2-CdA) alone or in combination with Mitoxantrone in the treatment of Waldenstrom's macroglobulinemia and first results with Bendamustine plus Rituximab: Results of prospective multicenter studies of a german lymphoma study group. Mathias J. Rummel and Paris S. Mitrou. Frankfurt, Germany.

Aim of our first study in 1994 was to evaluate rate and duration of remissions of 2-CdA in immunocytomas (first line therapy or first relapse). 2-CdA was applied as 2-hour infusion with 5 mg/m² day 1-5, for a max. of 6 cycles every 4 weeks. Out of 20 patients (pts) 17 responded to 2-CdA corresponding to an overall response rate (ORR) of 85% with a median remission duration of 28 months.

Subsequently in 1997 we examined efficacy of dose-reduced 2-CdA combined with mitoxantrone as first-line therapy or in first relapse: Treatment: 2-CdA 5 mg/m² as 2-hour infusion day 1-3, mitoxantrone 8 mg/m² day 1+2 for untreated pts or mitoxantrone 12 mg/m² day 1 for first relapse, max. 6 cycles every 4 weeks. The combination of 2-CdA plus mitoxantrone (CdM) showed a considerable high activity in the treatment of immunocytomas reaching an ORR of 100% in 17 pts with a median remission duration of 33 months. This study was the rationale for a prospective randomized trial, which is ongoing to compare CdM versus chlorambucil, mitoxantrone plus prednisone (MCP).

For pts with 1st to 3rd relapse with a previously fludarabine or cladribine containing treatment we initiated a study to examine efficacy of bendamustine combined with rituximab. The cytotoxic agent bendamustine combines a purine-like benzimidazol and bifunctionally alkylating nitrogen mustard group. Treatment: 6 cycles of rituximab 375 mg/qm day 1 combined with 4 cycles of bendamustine 90 mg/qm day 2+3, every 4 weeks. So far 6 pts are evaluable, all of them responded to this treatment. It is noteworthy that we were able to induce 2 complete remissions with disappearance of paraproteinemia determined by immunofixation using this combination of bendamustine plus rituximab.