

# Predialysis Hb Low in Diabetic Nephropathy

BY DOUG BRUNK

SAN DIEGO — Patients with diabetic nephropathy have a slightly lower mean level of hemoglobin in the year leading up to the start of renal dialysis, compared with patients who have nondiabetic renal disease, results of a large analysis showed.

The difference persisted after adjustment for several other variables including age, gender, ethnicity, and estimated

glomerular filtration rate, Dr. Daniel Ford said in an interview during a poster session at the annual meeting of the American Society of Nephrology.

“This reiterates what we know about patients with diabetic nephropathy—that they do have a tendency to have more anemia than patients with nondiabetic renal diseases,” said Dr. Ford of the United Kingdom Renal Registry, Bristol, England.

In what he said is the largest multicenter study of its kind in the United Kingdom, Dr. Ford and his associates evaluated the electronic medical records of 1,823 patients who underwent renal dialysis at seven centers between 2001 and 2006. They extracted data at time points 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 12 months prior to the commencement of dialysis and used a quadratic multilevel model to estimate the average pattern of de-

cline in hemoglobin over that period.

The median age of patients was 66 years. Patients with diabetic nephropathy had slightly lower mean hemoglobin levels prior to undergoing dialysis, compared with those who had nondiabetic renal disease (10.8 vs. 11.0 g/dL, respectively). “It’s a small difference, but it’s statistically significant,” Dr. Ford said.

Dr. Ford reported that he had no relevant financial conflicts to disclose. ■

## Important Safety Information (contd)

- EMBEDA™ may impair the mental and/or physical abilities needed to perform potentially hazardous activities such as driving a car or operating machinery. Patients must be cautioned accordingly. Patients should also be warned about the potential combined effects of EMBEDA™ with other CNS depressants, including other opioids, phenothiazines, sedative/hypnotics, and alcohol
- Agonist/antagonist analgesics (i.e., pentazocine, nalbuphine, butorphanol) should be administered with caution to a patient who has received or is receiving a course of therapy with EMBEDA™. In this situation, mixed agonist/antagonist analgesics may reduce the analgesic effect of EMBEDA™ and/or may precipitate withdrawal symptoms in these patients
- Consuming EMBEDA™ that has been tampered with by crushing, chewing, or dissolving the extended-release formulation can release sufficient naltrexone to precipitate withdrawal in opioid-dependent individuals. Symptoms of withdrawal usually appear within five minutes of ingestion of naltrexone and can last for up to 48 hours. Mental status changes can include confusion, somnolence, and visual hallucinations. Significant fluid losses from vomiting and diarrhea can require intravenous fluid administration. Patients should be closely monitored and therapy with non-opioid medications tailored to meet individual requirements
- **Care should be taken to use low initial doses of EMBEDA™ in patients who are not already opioid-tolerant, especially those who are receiving concurrent treatment with muscle relaxants, sedatives, or other CNS active medications**
- EMBEDA™ should not be abruptly discontinued
- Serious adverse reactions that may be associated with EMBEDA™ therapy in clinical use include: respiratory depression, respiratory arrest, apnea, circulatory depression, cardiac arrest, hypotension, and/or shock
- The common adverse events seen on initiation of therapy with EMBEDA™ are dose dependent, and their frequency depends on the clinical setting, the patient’s level of opioid tolerance, and host factors specific to the individual. They should be expected and managed as part of opioid analgesia. The most frequent of these include drowsiness, dizziness, constipation, and nausea
- Additional common adverse events reported during clinical studies include constipation, nausea, and somnolence
- EMBEDA™ should be used with great caution and in reduced dosage in patients who are concurrently receiving other central nervous system (CNS) depressants including sedatives, hypnotics, general anesthetics, antiemetics, phenothiazines, other tranquilizers, and alcohol because of the risk of respiratory depression, hypotension, and profound sedation or coma. When such combined therapy is contemplated, the initial dose of one or both agents should be reduced by at least 50%
- EMBEDA™ may enhance the neuromuscular blocking action of skeletal relaxants and produce an increased degree of respiratory depression
- Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs) have been reported to potentiate the effects of morphine anxiety, confusion, and significant depression of respiration or coma. EMBEDA™ should not be used in patients taking MAOIs or within 14 days of stopping such treatment
- There is an isolated report of confusion and severe respiratory depression when a hemodialysis patient was concurrently administered morphine and cimetidine
- Morphine can reduce the efficacy of diuretics by inducing the release of antidiuretic hormone. Morphine may also lead to acute retention of urine by causing spasm of the sphincter of the bladder, particularly in men with prostatism
- Anticholinergics or other medications with anticholinergic activity when used concurrently with opioid analgesics may result in increased risk of urinary retention and/or severe constipation, which may lead to paralytic ileus

## Indications and Usage

- EMBEDA™ is an extended-release oral formulation of morphine sulfate and naltrexone hydrochloride indicated for the management of moderate to severe pain when a continuous, around-the-clock opioid analgesic is needed for an extended period of time
- EMBEDA™ is NOT intended for use as a prn analgesic
- EMBEDA™ is not indicated for acute/postoperative pain or if the pain is mild or not expected to persist for an extended period of time. EMBEDA™ is only indicated for postoperative use if the patient is already receiving chronic opioid therapy prior to surgery or if the postoperative pain is expected to be moderate to severe and persist for an extended period of time

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information, including boxed warning, on the following pages.

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