



Preface

Iron overload in myelodysplastic syndromes

Chronic red-cell transfusion therapy in patients with myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS) can result in toxic iron overload. However, there is currently a lack of disease-specific data describing the direct impact of iron overload in MDS. As such, the potential benefits of iron chelation therapy in this patient population are unclear.

A consensus meeting entitled 'Iron Overload in Myelodysplastic Syndromes' was held on May 11, 2005, in Nagasaki, Japan, in association with the 8th International Symposium on Myelodysplastic Syndromes. A number of participants from three regions—Europe, Latin America, and Asia-Pacific—met to review and discuss various aspects of iron overload and chelation therapy in MDS. The primary aim of the meeting was to reach a consensus on issues relating to diagnosis and management of iron overload in MDS.

Following introductory presentations on the pathophysiology of iron overload and the clinical consequences of iron overload in MDS, there were three regional breakout meetings. The primary topics of discussion during these sessions were: the

screening and monitoring of iron levels in MDS patients, including any country-specific issues that might impact on the diagnosis and treatment of iron overload in patients with MDS; the profile of MDS patients who would most likely benefit from chelation therapy; and the potential role and benefits of iron chelation therapy in patients with MDS. The meeting highlighted a number of important inter- and intra-regional differences.

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