Beyond Triptans: A Review of New Migraine Medications in Clinical Trials

Christopher Nakagawa¹, Garret Hino Jr², Sheri Tokumaru, PharmD¹, Nicole Young, PharmD¹
1. The Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawaii, Hilo, HI

Background

- Migraines are a very common and debilitating headache disorder characterized by moderate to severe throbbing headache pain, which can be associated with nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light and sensitivity to sound.
- Migraines are also a huge economic and social burden, causing many people to miss productive days at work and school.
- Acute migraine attacks cause about 1.2 million visits to the emergency department a year.²
- There are many different options for treatment of acute migraine, one of the most effective classes being the triptans, which were first developed in the early 1990’s.
- Despite having many different classes of drugs for treating migraine, many people who suffer from migraines still are not able to fully control their migraine attacks.
- There have not been any new effective treatments for migraines since the development of triptans, and the research question is then, “Are there any new drugs in development for treatment of migraines and if so, what are they?”³

Methods

- This study is a literature review of recent and ongoing clinical trials for new classes of pharmacologic treatments for acute migraine
- Key words “migraine”, “novel drugs”, and “treatment” were searched in PubMed and ClinicalTrials.gov

Results

There are typically four phases of clinical trials, phase 0 – III prior to FDA approval. Phase 0 trials are exploratory studies. Phase 1 trials look at safety of a new drug. Once a new drug is deemed safe, it is able to start small scale studies to look for efficacy in Phase 2 trials. Phase 3 trials would test for efficacy on a larger scale, usually comparing the new drug to the current standard treatment. Thus, these CGRP targeting drugs, ALLOD-2, and serotonin 5HT1F blocking drugs, all in phase II-III trials, have shown adequate safety and are undergoing studies for efficacy. There are many other classes of drugs that have also been in recent clinical trials and have been discontinued for unknown reasons. The few classes of drugs mentioned here are what seemed to be the most promising.

Discussion

Many drugs are being studied for the treatment and prevention of migraine, but nothing since the triptan class has made a breakthrough as of yet. CGRP targeted drugs, ALLOD-2, and serotonin 5HT1F blockers new drugs for migraine treatment showing promise in clinical trials.

Disclosures

The authors of this presentation have nothing to disclose.

References