

Editorial

All That Glitters Is Not Gold: The GISSI - III Trial

The medical world had been waiting and holding its breath in suspense as to the outcome of the GISSI - III trial. Well, its finally in and the gist of the results runs as below.

The GISSI - III trial was set up to compare the efficacy of Streptokinase vs r-tPA vs APSAC. Millions of dollars and many a company's future, and, more importantly, the not so rich patient's future was at stake. The results were as astounding as the ISIS - II results had been. The relatively inexpensive Streptokinase came out the best of the lot! Not only was it more effective than the other two more expensive drugs, it shattered the myth of less chances of hemorrhagic strokes with more selective agents like r-tPA and APSAC! It was also shown that if aspirin could be added to SK, adding heparin was of no further benefit. Heparin was recommended only when aspirin was contra-indicated.

As a side issue, a peculiar fact that is emerging from data on all thrombolytic agents is the paradoxical though small but definite INCREASE in mortality within the first twenty four hours or so following thrombolysis compared to placebo. The stage now seems set for a debate on this interesting phenomenon (? epiphenomenon).

All said and done it has yet again been proven that all that glitters is indeed not gold. Thanks heaven for that!

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