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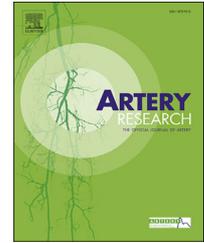
Artery 2014 symposium

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REVIEW

Artery 2014 symposium Introduction



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During the Artery 14 meeting (Maastricht, the Netherlands, October 9–11 2014) a symposium was held on “Arterial Stiffness: a translational approach”. The purpose of this symposium was to review current knowledge on the question whether arterial stiffness is a desirable target in the treatment of patients at cardiovascular risk. Three leading researchers in the field of arterial stiffness reviewed this question from different perspectives.

Luc van Bortel argued that arterial stiffness is now an established independent risk factor for cardiovascular disease. International hypertension guidelines have acknowledged the predictive value, reproducibility and cost-effectiveness of aortic pulse wave velocity (PWV) as a measure for arterial stiffness. The recent establishment of reference values for carotid-femoral PWV allow the study of long-term interventions that aim to reduce PWV. In the second contribution to the symposium Lorenzo Ghiadoni reviewed the effects of various antihypertensive drugs on arterial stiffness. Elevated PWV can be reduced by blood pressure lowering as such. However, certain antihypertensives can reduce PWV beyond the blood pressure

lowering effect. This seems particularly the case for drugs interfering with the renin-angiotensin system and calcium antagonists. In the final presentation during the symposium Charalambos Vlachopoulos further elaborated this point by focusing on combination therapy as an effective way to reach cardiovascular benefits by altering arterial stiffness and central hemodynamics. He reviewed several recent clinical trials that show that combining an ACE-blocker with a calcium antagonist has the potential to reduce cardiovascular risk by reducing arterial stiffness and improving central hemodynamics.

Large artery research has come a long way: it started decades ago as a basic research line to investigate mechanical properties of the arterial system. The availability of relatively simple and reproducible techniques to measure arterial stiffness has widened the field in many directions, ranging for basic mechanistic studies to population-based risk analyses. We have now reached the translational stage in which (pharmacological) interventions can prove whether arterial stiffness is indeed a desirable therapeutic target. The three following short reviews nicely define the playing field for this future development.

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Conflict of interest

HSB has received honoraria from Durect, Merck-Serono and Servier.

References

There are no references in this introduction.