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Patient Experience with Somatostatin Analog Treatments for Neuroendocrine Tumors: Insight from Qualitative Interviews



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BACKGROUND: Neuroendocrine tumors (NETs), a rare type of cancer, are associated with a negative impact on patients' quality of life. Octreotide LAR and lanreotide depot are both somatostatin analogs (SSAs) recommended to treat patients with NETs. This study aimed to understand the treatment-related experiences of patients with NETs who are receiving long-acting SSAs.

METHODS: This observational qualitative study included US-based adults with NETs who transitioned from octreotide LAR to lanreotide depot within the past year. Participants were recruited through collaboration with the Carcinoid Cancer Foundation. Those eligible completed a one-on-one, 60-minute telephone interview using a semi-structured interview guide that explored experiences with octreotide and lanreotide. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and coded for qualitative content analysis. Concept saturation was used to guide the sample size and ensure all information and themes were adequately uncovered.

RESULTS: Twenty patients (mean age: 58 years; 90% female; 85% white) participated in interviews. Approximately 70% of participants received octreotide for >24 months. Participants' median (range) treatment duration was 26.0 (6.0-26.0) months on octreotide and 10.5 (6.0-8.0) months on lanreotide depot. Reasons cited for treatment switch included "doctor recommendation" (70%), "treatment not working as expected" (55%), "injection type preference" (45%), and "injection site reaction" (30%). Participants reported 8 favorable attributes for octreotide and 26 attributes for lanreotide, with symptom control as the most frequently reported attribute for both (60% and 65%, respectively). Participants reported 43 unfavorable attributes for octreotide and 39 attributes for lanreotide, with painful injection as the most frequently reported for octreotide (65%) and varying experience dependent on administrator for lanreotide (35%). The most important SSA product attributes reported by patients with NETs, in rank order, were: side effects, symptom control, and ability to shrink/stabilize tumor.

CONCLUSION: Our qualitative interview data allows characterization of patient experiences with lanreotide or octreotide and highlights differences in treatment attributes.

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