Tinidazole - a new preparation for Trichomonas vaginalis infections
I. Laboratory evaluation

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Tinidazole is a potent member of a new series of nitroimidazoles which are being used as antibiotics (Howes, Lynch, and Kivlin, 1970). The formula is: ethyl (2-(2-methyl-5-nitro-1-imidazolyl) ethyl) sulphone. Nothing has been published about the effect of tinidazole on strains of Trichomonas vaginalis isolated from clinical infections. A laboratory study of the relative efficacy of tinidazole and metronidazole against strains of T. vaginalis from patients and the serum level of tinidazole after its ingestion in a single dose are the subjects of this study.

Material and methods
Minimum inhibitory and minimum trichomonicidal concentrations (MIC and MCC)
These were determined essentially as described earlier (Forsgren, 1972). Eight freshly isolated strains of T. vaginalis taken at random from patient specimens formed the subject of the study. Before use, the organism was grown in Diamond's medium (Diamond, 1957) at 37°C. A suspension of $8 \times 10^4$ T. vaginalis organisms in 1 ml. thioglycolate medium was added to metronidazole and tinidazole in serial two-fold dilutions in 1 ml. saline, giving a final concentration of $4 \times 10^5$ viable organisms per ml.

After incubation for 3 days at 37°C, a microscopical examination was performed, and the highest dilution of tinidazole without any motile organisms was recorded as the MIC. From each test tube 0-2 ml. was transferred to 4 ml. Diamond's medium and the subculture was incubated for 5 days. Evaluation of the trichomonicidal activity was based on the final result of the subculture and the MCC was defined as the concentration (µg./ml.) in which no viable organisms could be detected by subculture. The determinations were always carried out in duplicate.

Serum levels
The levels of tinidazole were determined on serum taken from four healthy volunteers before and at intervals after ingestion of 2 g. tinidazole on an empty stomach. The sera were heat-inactivated (Forsgren, 1972), diluted in saline, and tested against T. vaginalis (Milan*) in thioglycolate medium, and finally subcultures were performed in Diamond's medium as described above. The serum level was calculated by reference to a standard series of tubes containing known concentrations of tinidazole.

Results
Table I shows the MIC values of metronidazole and tinidazole for the eight strains of T. vaginalis isolated from patients. The MIC values for metronidazole (0-31 to 1-25 µg./ml.) were up to four times those for tinidazole (0-12 to 1-25 µg./ml.). The mean values were 0-90 and 0-52 µg./ml. respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strain of T. vaginalis</th>
<th>MIC (µg./ml.)</th>
<th>Percentage activity of metronidazole relative to tinidazole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metronidazole</td>
<td>Tinidazole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean value</td>
<td>0-90</td>
<td>0-52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As demonstrated in Table II, the differences in MCC for the two drugs were even more striking. The MCC values for metronidazole were 1-88 to 10-0 µg./ml. (mean 3-83), and for tinidazole 1-25 to 2-5 µg./ml. (mean 1-56, which is roughly 40 per cent. of that for metronidazole).

These results are in agreement with an earlier report on one laboratory strain of T. vaginalis (Howes and others, 1970).

The serum levels of tinidazole in four healthy volunteers, 20, 21, 22, and 23 years old, who ingested 2g. tinidazole in a single dose are shown in the Figure.

High levels (15 to 30 µg./ml.) were found after 4 hrs and the highest values (20 to 40 µg./ml.) after 6 to

Received for publication June 22, 1973
*Kindly supplied by Dr. I. de Carnieri
TABLE II  Minimum trichomonicidal concentration (MCC) of tinidazole and metronidazole for freshly isolated strains of T. vaginalis. The determinations were done by incubation for 3 days followed by subculture for 5 days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strain of T. vaginalis</th>
<th>MCC (µg./ml.)</th>
<th>Percentage activity of metronidazole relative to tinidazole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tinidazole</td>
<td>Metronidazole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10-0</td>
<td>1-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>1-25</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3-75</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1-88</td>
<td>1-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>1-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean value</td>
<td>3-83</td>
<td>1-56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary and conclusions

The minimum trichomonicidal concentrations of tinidazole for eight strains of T. vaginalis freshly isolated from patients were 1.25 to 2.5 µg./ml (mean 1.56). For metronidazole the values were 1.88 to 10 µg./ml. (mean 3.83). Thus tinidazole had a trichomonicidal effect 1.3 to 8 times higher than that of metronidazole.

Moreover, 6 to 11 hrs after the ingestion of 2 g. tinidazole in a single dose, the highest serum levels in four healthy volunteers were 20 to 40 µg./ml.; 48 hrs after ingestion, the serum concentration of tinidazole remained higher than the minimum trichomonicidal concentration for most of the investigated strains of T. vaginalis.

References


Tinidazole, une nouvelle préparation contre les infections à Trichomonas vaginalis
I. Constatations de laboratoire

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La concentration trichomonacide minimale du tinidazole pour 8 souches de T. vaginalis isolées récemment chez des malades se situe entre 1.25 et 2.5 µg/ml (moyenne: 1.56). Pour le métronidazole, ces valeurs se situèrent entre 1.88 et 10 µg/ml (moyenne: 3.83). Ainsi, le tinidazole a un effet trichomonacide de 1.3 à 8 fois plus élevé que celui du métronidazole.

D'autre part, 6 à 11 heures après l'ingestion de 2 g de tinidazole en une seule prise, les taux sériques les plus élevés pour quatre volontaires sains furent entre 20 et 40 µg/ml. 48 heures après l'ingestion, la concentration sérique de tinidazole resta plus élevée que la concentration trichomonacide minimale pour la plupart des souches de T. vaginalis examinées.
Trinidazole--a new preparation for Trichomonas vaginalis infections. I. Laboratory evaluation.
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Br J Vener Dis 1974 50: 146-147
doi: 10.1136/sti.50.2.146

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