

Focal cerebral arteriopathy accounts for up to 35% of arterial ischemic stroke (AIS) in children and is the most important predictor of stroke recurrence. The study objective was to compare outcomes for children with focal cerebral arteriopathy treated with combined corticosteroid antithrombotic treatment (CAT) to those receiving antithrombotic treatment (AT) alone. METHODS:

This multicenter retrospective Swiss/Australian cohort study analyzed consecutive children, aged 1 month to 18 years, presenting with first AIS because of a focal cerebral arteriopathy from 2000 to 2014. Children with CAT were compared with those treated with AT. Primary outcome was the presence of neurological deficits at 6 months post-AIS as measured by the Pediatric Stroke Outcome Measure. Secondary outcomes included resolution of stenosis and stroke recurrence. Analysis of covariance was used to adjust for potential confounders (baseline pediatric National Institute of Health Stroke Scale and concomitant acyclovir use). RESULTS:

A total of 73 children (51% males) were identified, 21 (29%) of whom received CAT. Mean (SD) age at stroke for the entire group was 7.9 years (4.7). Median (interquartile range) pediatric National Institute of Health Stroke Scale was 3 (2.0-8.0) in the CAT group and 5 (3.0-9.0) in the AT group ($P=0.098$). Median (interquartile range) Pediatric Stroke Outcome Measure 6 months post-AIS was 0.5 (0-1.5) in the CAT group compared with 1.0 (0.5-2.0) in the AT group ($P=0.035$), the finding was sustained after adjusting for potential confounders. Complete resolution of stenosis at last MRI was noted in 17 (81%) in the CAT group compared with 24 (59%) in the AT group ($P=0.197$). Stroke recurrence occurred in 1 patient in each group. CONCLUSIONS:

Corticosteroid treatment may provide additional benefit over AT for improved neurological outcome in childhood AIS because of focal cerebral arteriopathy. Larger prospective studies are warranted to further investigate these differences and understand mechanisms by which steroids modify outcome

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Steinlin M, Bigi S, Stojanovski B, Gajera J, Regényi M, El-Koussy M, Mackay MT; Swiss NeuroPediatric Stroke Registry. Focal Cerebral Arteriopathy: Do Steroids Improve Outcome? Stroke. 2017 Sep;48(9):2375-2382. doi: 10.1161/STROKEAHA.117.016818. Epub 2017 Jul 21. PubMed PMID: 28733481.

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