

Letter to the Editor

Anaphylactoid Reaction due to AZQ

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AZQ, 1,4 cyclohexadiene-1,4 dicarbonic acid, 2,5-bis (1-azirindinyl)-3,6-dioxodiethylester (NSC 182986) is a lipophilic agent with antitumor activity noted in phase II trials [2]. We observed a life-threatening, immediate anaphylactoid reaction in a patient receiving AZQ by intermittent IV bolus every 3 weeks as part of a national phase II trial in non-oat cell carcinoma (CALGB 8046).

The patient is a 65-year-old white female with large cell carcinoma of the lung, who tolerated rapid infusion of AZQ over 30 min well except for mild nausea and anemia. At the time of her ninth cycle, she developed local hives at the site of the catheter, which were felt to be due to the antiseptic skin cleaning solution. She was not receiving any other medication. At the time of the tenth cycle, the patient with PS O received approximately 5 mg AZQ (lot # BV 81-207) with *N*, *N*-dimethylacetamide solvent (DMA lot # BV 81-223). She developed the sudden onset of cyanosis, wheezing, hypotension (BP systolic 80), and diaphoresis. Rapid IV infusion of fluid, aminophylline, corticosteroids, and SC epinephrine reversed the shock reaction within 30 min, with full recovery in 2 h.

Antineoplastic agents have been previously associated with immediate hypersensitivity reactions with L-asparaginase being the most common causative agent [1, 3]. In this case, the patient had no other medication except the AZQ dissolved in DMA. The incidence of this allergic reaction may be rare, as in the Cancer and Leukemia Group B trials of AZQ (a total of 200 patients) (Weinberg, unpublished work) only this patient manifested a life-threatening allergic reaction, giving an incidence at the 95% confidence level of 0–1.5%.

References

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