

Patients Over 80 Do Well After Cardiac Surgery

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NEW ORLEANS — Old age is not a reason to deny cardiac surgery to patients.

Patients aged 80 and older who underwent cardiac surgery had a life expectancy that was as good as the current average survival rate for similarly aged people in the U.S. population, according to three separate reports presented at annual scientific sessions of the American Heart Association.

Cardiac surgery “is a viable option for selected patients” aged 80 and older,” Dr. Paul Kurlansky said at the meeting. Chronologic age alone should not be a criterion for deciding whether an elderly patient should be offered cardiac surgery, added Dr. Kurlansky, a cardiothoracic surgeon and director of research at the Florida Heart Research Institute in Miami, who presented one of the meeting reports.

His report reviewed the experience of 1,062 consecutive patients aged 80-99 years

who underwent on-pump coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG) during 1989-2001 at Mount Sinai Medical Center, a community hospital in Miami Beach. The average age of these patients was 83. During a mean follow-up of 6 years, actuarial survival following surgery was about 6 years, closely matching the current life expectancy for people aged 80 in the United States.

“Without surgery, their survival would be very short. If survivorship is 5 or 6 years [with surgery], you are offering these pa-

tients something that they wouldn't otherwise have,” Dr. Kurlansky said.

In addition, a “very remarkable” finding was how they were doing overall and how they perceived their health. The Short Form-36 health-status questionnaire was completed by 545 of the patients during an in-person or telephone interview an average of 3 years after hospital discharge. The results showed that their self-rated physical- and mental-health scores very closely matched the scores of aged-matched



Rx only

Brief Summary of full prescribing information

WARNING: SPINAL / EPIDURAL HEMATOMAS

When neuraxial anesthesia (epidural/spinal anesthesia) or spinal puncture is employed, patients anticoagulated or scheduled to be anticoagulated with low molecular weight heparins or heparinoids for prevention of thromboembolic complications are at risk of developing an epidural or spinal hematoma which can result in long-term or permanent paralysis.

The risk of these events is increased by the use of indwelling epidural catheters for administration of analgesia or by the concomitant use of drugs affecting hemostasis such as non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), platelet inhibitors, or other anticoagulants. The risk also appears to be increased by traumatic or repeated epidural or spinal puncture.

Monitor patients for signs and symptoms of neurological impairment. If neurologic compromise is noted, urgent treatment is necessary.

Consider the potential benefit versus risk before neuraxial intervention in patients anticoagulated or to be anticoagulated for thromboprophylaxis [see Warnings and Precautions (5.1) and Drug Interactions (7)].

1 INDICATIONS AND USAGE

1.1 Prophylaxis of Deep Vein Thrombosis

Lovenox is indicated for the prophylaxis of deep vein thrombosis, which may lead to pulmonary embolism:

- in patients undergoing abdominal surgery who are at risk for thromboembolic complications [see *Clinical Studies* (14.1)].
- in patients undergoing hip replacement surgery, during and following hospitalization.
- in patients undergoing knee replacement surgery.
- in medical patients who are at risk for thromboembolic complications due to severely restricted mobility during acute illness.

1.2 Treatment of Acute Deep Vein Thrombosis

Lovenox is indicated for:

- the **inpatient treatment** of acute deep vein thrombosis **with or without pulmonary embolism**, when administered in conjunction with warfarin sodium;
- the **outpatient treatment** of acute deep vein thrombosis **without pulmonary embolism** when administered in conjunction with warfarin sodium.

1.3 Prophylaxis of Ischemic Complications of Unstable Angina and Non-Q-Wave Myocardial Infarction

Lovenox is indicated for the prophylaxis of ischemic complications of unstable angina and non-Q-wave myocardial infarction, when concurrently administered with aspirin.

1.4 Treatment of acute ST-segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI)

Lovenox has been shown to reduce the rate of the combined endpoint of recurrent myocardial infarction or death in patients with acute STEMI receiving thrombolysis and being managed medically or with Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI).

4 CONTRAINDICATIONS

- Active major bleeding.
- Thrombocytopenia associated with a positive *in vitro* test for anti-platelet antibody in the presence of enoxaparin sodium.
- Known hypersensitivity to enoxaparin sodium (e.g., pruritus, urticaria, anaphylactic/anaphylactoid reactions) [see *Adverse Reactions* (6.2)].
- Known hypersensitivity to heparin or pork products.
- Known hypersensitivity to benzyl alcohol (which is in only the multi-dose formulation of Lovenox).

5 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

5.1 Increased Risk of Hemorrhage

Cases of epidural or spinal hematomas have been reported with the associated use of Lovenox and spinal/epidural anesthesia or spinal puncture resulting in long-term or permanent paralysis. The risk of these events is higher with the use of post-operative indwelling epidural catheters or by the concomitant use of additional drugs affecting hemostasis such as NSAIDs [see *boxed Warning, Adverse Reactions* (6.2) and *Drug Interactions* (7)].

Lovenox should be used with extreme caution in conditions with increased risk of hemorrhage, such as bacterial endocarditis, congenital or acquired bleeding disorders, active ulcerative and angiodysplastic gastrointestinal disease, hemorrhagic stroke, or shortly after brain, spinal, or ophthalmological surgery, or in patients treated concomitantly with platelet inhibitors.

Major hemorrhages including retroperitoneal and intracranial bleeding have been reported. Some of these cases have been fatal.

Bleeding can occur at any site during therapy with Lovenox. An unexplained fall in hematocrit or blood pressure should lead to a search for a bleeding site.

5.2 Percutaneous Coronary Revascularization Procedures

To minimize the risk of bleeding following the vascular instrumentation during the treatment of unstable angina, non-Q-wave myocardial infarction and acute ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction, adhere precisely to the intervals recommended between Lovenox doses. It is important to achieve hemostasis at the puncture site after PCI. In case a closure device is used, the sheath can be removed immediately. If a manual compression method is used, sheath should be removed 6 hours after the last IV/SC Lovenox. If the treatment with enoxaparin sodium is to be continued, the next scheduled dose should be given no sooner than 6 to 8 hours after sheath removal. The site of the procedure should be observed for signs of bleeding or hematoma formation [see *Dosage and Administration* (2.1)].

5.3 Use of Lovenox with Concomitant Medical Conditions

Lovenox should be used with care in patients with a bleeding diathesis, uncontrolled arterial hypertension or a history of recent gastrointestinal ulceration, diabetic retinopathy, renal dysfunction and hemorrhage.

5.4 History of Heparin-induced Thrombocytopenia

Lovenox should be used with extreme caution in patients with a history of heparin-induced thrombocytopenia.

5.5 Thrombocytopenia

Thrombocytopenia can occur with the administration of Lovenox.

Moderate thrombocytopenia (platelet counts between 100,000/mm³ and 50,000/mm³) occurred at a rate of 1.3% in patients given Lovenox, 1.2% in patients given heparin, and 0.7% in patients given placebo in clinical trials.

Platelet counts less than 50,000/mm³ occurred at a rate of 0.1% in patients given Lovenox, in 0.2% of patients given heparin, and 0.4% of patients given placebo in the same trials.

Thrombocytopenia of any degree should be monitored closely. If the platelet count falls below 100,000/mm³, Lovenox should be discontinued. Cases of heparin-induced thrombocytopenia with thrombosis have also been observed in clinical practice. Some of these cases were complicated by organ infarction, limb ischemia, or death [see *Warnings and Precautions* (5.4)].

5.6 Interchangeability with Other Heparins

Lovenox cannot be used interchangeably (unit for unit) with heparin or other low molecular weight heparins as they differ in manufacturing process, molecular weight distribution, anti-Xa and anti-IIa activities, units, and dosage. Each of these medicines has its own instructions for use.

5.7 Pregnant Women with Mechanical Prosthetic Heart Valves

The use of Lovenox for thromboprophylaxis in pregnant women with mechanical prosthetic heart valves has not been adequately studied. In a clinical study of pregnant women with mechanical prosthetic heart valves given enoxaparin (1 mg/kg twice daily) to reduce the risk of thromboembolism, 2 of 8 women developed clots resulting in blockage of the valve and leading to maternal and fetal death. Although a causal relationship has not been established these deaths may have been due to therapeutic failure or inadequate anticoagulation. No patients in the heparin/warfarin group (0 of 4 women) died. There also have been isolated postmarketing reports of valve thrombosis in pregnant women with mechanical prosthetic heart valves while receiving enoxaparin for thromboprophylaxis. Women with mechanical prosthetic heart valves may be at higher risk for thromboembolism during pregnancy, and, when pregnant, have a higher rate of fetal loss from stillbirth, spontaneous abortion and premature delivery. Therefore, frequent monitoring of peak and trough anti-Factor Xa levels, and adjusting of dosage may be needed [see *Use in Specific Populations* (8.6)].

5.8 Benzyl Alcohol

Lovenox multiple-dose vials contain benzyl alcohol as a preservative. The administration of medications containing benzyl alcohol as a preservative to premature neonates has been associated with a fatal “Gasping Syndrome”. Because benzyl alcohol may cross the placenta, Lovenox multiple-dose vials, preserved with benzyl alcohol, should be used with caution in pregnant women and only if clearly needed [see *Use in Specific Populations* (8.1)].

5.9 Laboratory Tests

Periodic complete blood counts, including platelet count, and stool occult blood tests are recommended during the course of treatment with Lovenox. When administered at recommended prophylaxis doses, routine coagulation tests such as Prothrombin Time (PT) and Activated Partial Thromboplastin Time (aPTT) are relatively insensitive measures of Lovenox activity and, therefore, unsuitable for monitoring. Anti-Factor Xa may be used to monitor the anticoagulant effect of Lovenox in patients with significant renal impairment. If during Lovenox therapy abnormal coagulation parameters or bleeding should occur, anti-Factor Xa levels may be used to monitor the anticoagulant effects of Lovenox [see *Clinical Pharmacology* (12.3)].

norms for the U.S. population, he reported.

His analysis also showed that during the 12-year period reviewed, the rate of in-hospital mortality in patients undergoing CABG at Mount Sinai steadily fell from a high of nearly 15% in 1989 to a rate of just over 2% by 2001. It is not clear what led to this dramatic increase in perioperative safety, but possible factors are reduced perfusion times, improved anesthesia techniques, and overall better patient care, he said.

The second report at the meeting reviewed 8,796 patients who underwent aortic valve surgery, with or without concurrent CABG, at eight medical centers in northern New England during 1989-2006.

This included about 1,000 patients aged 80-84, and about 350 patients aged at least 85.

The median survival rate following surgery was about 7 years in both patients aged 80-84 and those aged 85 and older. Expected survival rates in the general U.S. population in people 80-84 is also 7 years, and 5 years for those aged 85 and older, said Donald S. Likosky, Ph.D., a health policy analyst at Dartmouth Medical School



in Lebanon, N.H. The survival rates in the elderly cardiac surgery patients were similar whether they underwent valve surgery only or had combined valve surgery and CABG. The third report at the meeting reviewed 203 patients aged 80 or older (average age 83) who underwent aortic-valve surgery at the Methodist-DeBakey Heart Center in Houston during 1977-2008. A third of the patients also had

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DR. KURLANSKY

aortic-valve surgery at the Methodist-DeBakey Heart Center in Houston during 1977-2008. A third of the patients also had

concurrent CABG. The average perioperative mortality in these patients was about 6%, not significantly different from the average 4% perioperative mortality in 1,020 patients aged 79 or younger (average age 63) who also had aortic valve surgery, and in some cases CABG, at the Methodist-DeBakey Heart Center during the same period, Dr. Gerald M. Lawrie reported in a poster. Dr. Lawrie and his associates did not compare long-term mortality rates in their octogenarian, postsurgical patients with those of age-matched norms.

To see an interview with Dr. Kurlansky, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=rr-dzV_epv0.

6 ADVERSE REACTIONS

6.1 Clinical Trials Experience

Because clinical studies are conducted under widely varying conditions, adverse reaction rates observed in the clinical studies of a drug cannot be directly compared to rates in the clinical studies of another drug and may not reflect the rates observed in practice.

Hemorrhage

The incidence of major hemorrhagic complications during Lovenox treatment has been low.

The following rates of major bleeding events have been reported during clinical trials with Lovenox Injection [see Tables 2 to 7].

Table 2
Major Bleeding Episodes Following Abdominal and Colorectal Surgery¹

Indications	Dosing Regimen	
	Lovenox 40 mg q.d. SC	Heparin 5000 U q8h SC
Abdominal Surgery	n = 555 23 (4%)	n = 560 16 (3%)
Colorectal Surgery	n = 673 28 (4%)	n = 674 21 (3%)

¹ Bleeding complications were considered major: (1) if the hemorrhage caused a significant clinical event, or (2) if accompanied by a hemoglobin decrease ≥ 2 g/dL or transfusion of 2 or more units of blood products. Retroperitoneal, intraocular, and intracranial hemorrhages were always considered major.

Table 3
Major Bleeding Episodes Following Hip or Knee Replacement Surgery¹

Indications	Dosing Regimen		
	Lovenox 40 mg q.d. SC	Lovenox 30 mg q12h SC	Heparin 15,000 U/24h SC
Hip Replacement Surgery Without Extended Prophylaxis ²		n = 786 31 (4%)	n = 541 32 (6%)
Hip Replacement Surgery With Extended Prophylaxis Peri-operative Period ³	n = 288 4 (2%)		
Extended Prophylaxis Period ⁴	n = 221 0 (0%)		
Knee Replacement Surgery Without Extended Prophylaxis ²		n = 294 3 (1%)	n = 225 3 (1%)

¹ Bleeding complications were considered major: (1) if the hemorrhage caused a significant clinical event, or (2) if accompanied by a hemoglobin decrease ≥ 2 g/dL or transfusion of 2 or more units of blood products. Retroperitoneal and intracranial hemorrhages were always considered major. In the knee replacement surgery trials, intraocular hemorrhages were also considered major hemorrhages.

² Lovenox 30 mg every 12 hours SC initiated 12 to 24 hours after surgery and continued for up to 14 days after surgery.

³ Lovenox 40 mg SC once a day initiated up to 12 hours prior to surgery and continued for up to 7 days after surgery.

⁴ Lovenox 40 mg SC once a day for up to 21 days after discharge.

NOTE: At no time point were the 40 mg once a day pre-operative and the 30 mg every 12 hours post-operative hip replacement surgery prophylactic regimens compared in clinical trials.

Injection site hematomas during the extended prophylaxis period after hip replacement surgery occurred in 9% of the Lovenox patients versus 1.8% of the placebo patients.

Table 4
Major Bleeding Episodes in Medical Patients With Severely Restricted Mobility During Acute Illness¹

Indications	Dosing Regimen		
	Lovenox ² 20 mg q.d. SC	Lovenox ² 40 mg q.d. SC	Placebo ²
Medical Patients During Acute Illness	n = 351 1 (<1%)	n = 360 3 (<1%)	n = 362 2 (<1%)

¹ Bleeding complications were considered major: (1) if the hemorrhage caused a significant clinical event, (2) if the hemorrhage caused a decrease in hemoglobin of ≥ 2 g/dL or transfusion of 2 or more units of blood products. Retroperitoneal and intracranial hemorrhages were always considered major although none were reported during the trial.

² The rates represent major bleeding on study medication up to 24 hours after last dose.

Table 5
Major Bleeding Episodes in Deep Vein Thrombosis With or Without Pulmonary Embolism Treatment¹

Indication	Dosing Regimen ²		
	Lovenox 1.5 mg/kg q.d. SC	Lovenox 1 mg/kg q12h SC	Heparin aPTT Adjusted IV Therapy
Treatment of DVT and PE	n = 298 5 (2%)	n = 559 9 (2%)	n = 554 9 (2%)

¹ Bleeding complications were considered major: (1) if the hemorrhage caused a significant clinical event, or (2) if accompanied by a hemoglobin decrease ≥ 2 g/dL or transfusion of 2 or more units of blood products. Retroperitoneal, intraocular, and intracranial hemorrhages were always considered major.

² All patients also received warfarin sodium (dose-adjusted according to PT to achieve an INR of 2.0 to 3.0) commencing within 72 hours of Lovenox or standard heparin therapy and continuing for up to 90 days.

Table 6
Major Bleeding Episodes in Unstable Angina and Non-Q-Wave Myocardial Infarction

Indication	Dosing Regimen	
	Lovenox ¹ 1 mg/kg q12h SC	Heparin ¹ aPTT Adjusted IV Therapy
Unstable Angina and Non-Q-Wave MI ^{2,3}	n = 1578 17 (1%)	n = 1529 18 (1%)

¹ The rates represent major bleeding on study medication up to 12 hours after dose.

² Aspirin therapy was administered concurrently (100 to 325 mg per day).

³ Bleeding complications were considered major: (1) if the hemorrhage caused a significant clinical event, or (2) if accompanied by a hemoglobin decrease by ≥ 3 g/dL or transfusion of 2 or more units of blood products. Intraocular, retroperitoneal, and intracranial hemorrhages were always considered major.

Table 7
Major Bleeding Episodes in acute ST-segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction

Indication	Dosing Regimen	
	Lovenox ¹ Initial 30-mg IV bolus followed by 1 mg/kg q12h SC	Heparin ¹ aPTT Adjusted IV Therapy
acute ST-segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction	n = 10176 n (%)	n = 10151 n (%)
- Major bleeding (including ICH) ²	211 (2.1)	138 (1.4)
- Intracranial hemorrhages (ICH)	84 (0.8)	66 (0.7)

¹ The rates represent major bleeding (including ICH) up to 30 days

² Bleedings were considered major if the hemorrhage caused a significant clinical event associated with a hemoglobin decrease by ≥ 5 g/dL. ICH were always considered major.

Thrombocytopenia:

[See Warnings and Precautions (5.5)]

Elevations of Serum Aminotransferases

Asymptomatic increases in aspartate (AST [SGOT]) and alanine (ALT [SGPT]) aminotransferase levels greater than three times the upper limit of normal of the laboratory reference range have been reported in up to 6.1% and 5.9% of patients, respectively, during treatment with Lovenox. Similar significant increases in aminotransferase levels have also been observed in patients and healthy volunteers treated with heparin and other low molecular weight heparins. Such elevations are fully reversible and are rarely associated with increases in bilirubin.

Since aminotransferase determinations are important in the differential diagnosis of myocardial infarction, liver disease, and pulmonary emboli, elevations that might be caused by drugs like Lovenox should be interpreted with caution.

Local Reactions

Mild local irritation, pain, hematoma, ecchymosis, and erythema may follow SC injection of Lovenox.

Other

Other adverse effects that were thought to be possibly or probably related to treatment with Lovenox, heparin, or placebo in clinical trials with patients undergoing hip or knee replacement surgery, abdominal or colorectal surgery, or treatment for DVT and that occurred at a rate of at least 2% in the Lovenox group, are provided below [see Tables 8 to 11].