

- sickle cell anemia: risks and benefits up to 9 years of treatment. *JAMA* 2003;289:1645-51.
5. Tefferi A. Is hydroxyurea leukemogenic in essential thrombocythemia? *Blood* 1998;92:1459-60.
  6. Storen EC, Tefferi A. Long-term use of anagrelide in young patients with essential thrombocythemia. *Blood* 2001;97:863-6.
  7. Mazzucconi MG, Redi R, Bernasconi S, Bizzone L, Dragoni F, Latagliata R, et al. A long-term study of young patients with essential thrombocythemia treated with anagrelide. *Haematologica* 2004;89:1306-13.
  8. Birgegard G, Bjorkholm M, Kutti J, Larfars G, Lofvenberg E, Markevarn B, et al. Adverse effects and benefits of two years of anagrelide treatment for thrombocythemia in chronic myeloproliferative disorders. *Haematologica* 2004;89:520-7.
  9. Jurgens DJ, Moreno-Aspitia A, Tefferi A. Anagrelide-associated cardiomyopathy in polycythemia vera and essential thrombocythemia. *Haematologica* 2004;89:1394-5.
  10. Green AR, Vassiliou GS, Curtin N, Campbell PJ. Management of the myeloproliferative disorders: distinguishing data from dogma. *Hematol J* 2004;5 Suppl 3:S126-32.

---

### **Risk of deep vein thrombosis: interaction between oral contraceptives and high factor VIII levels**

Oral contraceptive use is associated with a significant increase in the risk of venous thromboembolism. It has been previously reported that some thrombophilic alterations such as factor V Leiden and G20210A prothrombin mutation display a synergistic interaction with oral contraceptive use. Heterozygous carriers of these mutations who use oral contraceptives have a 20- to 40-fold higher risk of thrombosis than non-users who have a normal genotype.

High levels of factor VIII are another common risk factor for venous thromboembolism. In this issue, Legnani and co-workers<sup>1</sup> show that the risk of venous thromboembolism due to oral contraceptives is increased further in women with elevated levels of factor VIII, and that the raised levels of the coagulation factor and oral contraceptive use likely have a synergistic effect. A few papers on this topic have previously appeared in the journal.<sup>2-5</sup> In addition, a Continuing Medical Education quiz in this issue deals with the interaction between oral contraceptives and high factor VIII levels, and the risk of deep vein thrombosis in women (<http://cme.haematologica.org/>).

---

### **References**

1. Legnani C, Cini M, Cosmi B, Poggi M, Boggiani O, Palareti G. Risk of deep vein thrombosis: interaction between oral contraceptive and high factor VIII levels. *Haematologica* 2004;89:1347-51.
2. Tripodi A. Levels of coagulation factors and venous thromboembolism. *Haematologica* 2003;88:705-11.
3. Oger E, Lacut K, Van Dreden P, Bressollette L, Abgrall JF, Blouch MT, et al. High plasma concentration of factor VIII coagulant is also a risk factor for venous thromboembolism in the elderly. *Haematologica* 2003;88:465-9.
4. Libourel EJ, Bank I, Meinardi JR, Balje-Volkers CP, Hamulyak K, Middeldorp S, et al. Co-segregation of thrombophilic disorders in factor V Leiden carriers; the contributions of factor VIII, factor XI, thrombin activatable fibrinolysis inhibitor and lipoprotein(a) to the absolute risk of venous thromboembolism. *Haematologica* 2002;87:1068-73.
5. Faricciotti A, Bucciarelli P, Vismara A, Porro T, Guariglia A, Castelli R. Elevated levels of factor VIII:C, oral contraceptives and thrombosis: report of a case. *Haematologica* 2002;87:ECR18.