

## Analysis: PPIs and H2RAs

**W**hat follows is a summary of the panel's views on how PPIs compare to H2RAs for various acid-related conditions.

### GERD

All the studies to date show PPIs are superior to H2RAs in healing reflux disease. Furthermore, the time to healing is shorter with PPIs than with H2RAs. This translates to more rapid symptom relief with PPIs, which is desirable from a patient's point of view. Faster relief of symptoms improves quality of life. From an employer's point of view, the faster symptoms are relieved, the sooner patients can return to fully productive work.

Short-term direct comparisons of PPIs and H2RAs reveal equivalent safety for the two drugs. Originally, studies in the rat suggested hypergastrinemia resulting from PPI treatment led to the development of gastric carcinoids. Further study determined the rat has unique characteristics making it vulnerable to these tumors and that data from the rat were not applicable to humans. In more than 15 years of experience with PPIs, there has been no report of treatment-related malignancy.

A study comparing PPIs and H2RAs in the treatment of erosive esophagitis found that 1 year treatment with lanso-

prazole was less expensive compared with branded H2RAs and comparable in cost to generic cimetidine.<sup>1</sup>

Initial Treatment	Total Cost (1 year)
PPIs (lansoprazole)	\$1,192.00
Branded H2RAs (ranitidine)	\$1,495.00
Generic H2RAs (cimetidine)	\$1,152.00

### Peptic Ulcer Disease

The cornerstone of therapy is eradication of *H. pylori*. A PPI can be used along with one or two antibiotics to promote healing. Both PPIs and H2RAs have comparable ability to heal ulcers; however, earlier symptom relief has been seen with PPIs. PPI-based triple therapy is probably the most cost-effective choice, if recurrences are taken into account. Some of the other regimens have increased complexity, which decreases compliance—thereby lowering efficacy. The safety profiles of both classes of drug are comparable.

Panelists agreed that if costs were equal between the two types of agents, they would choose a PPI. With PPIs, patients enjoy faster healing and more complete relief of symptoms.

### ... REFERENCE ...

1. Zagari M, Villa KF, Freston JW. *Am J Man Care* 1995;1:247-255.