

What is ototoxicity?

- *“... tendency of certain substances to cause functional impairment and cellular damage to the tissues of the inner ear*
- *... especially to the end organs of the cochlear and vestibular divisions of N. VIII that can occur from systemic or topical administration.”*

Rhatican, Mandel and Rutka (2004)
in Roland and Rutka:198-206

What is ototoxicity? (cont)

“Therapeutic drug regimes including some medications used to treat cancer and infectious diseases can be toxic to inner ear tissues...”

Fausti et al. (2007) in Campbell:230-251

“Ear Poisoning”

- **Cochleotoxicity**
 - Hearing loss
 - Tinnitus
 - Hyperacusis
 - Speech discrimination difficulties
- **Vestibulotoxicity**
 - Vertigo
 - Disequilibrium/imbalance
 - Instability of visual field

Black et al. (2004); Halmagyi et al. (1994)

“Ear Poisoning” agents

- **Treatments for HIV/AIDS: ARV**
- **Treatments for HIV-related opportunistic infections**
- **Certain chemotherapeutic agents**
- **Diuretics**
- **Quinine**
- **Salicylates**

Ototoxic medication guide

“We need to know about the many agents that can damage our ears”

This handy guide is a resource for Audiologists and Speech-Language therapists

See handout

Cancer: A life threatening disease

- Cancer affects millions of people world wide
- 10 million new diagnoses annually
- WHO estimates 15 million by 2020
- 12500 pediatric diagnoses annually (National Cancer Institute)
- After cardiovascular disease the 2nd largest cause of death

Cancer in Africa and SA

- More than 60% of all cancer cases occur in developing countries (International Network for Cancer Treatment and Research)
- Occurrence of cancer increasing
 - Nutrition
 - Public health issues
 - HIV/AIDS risk factor
 - Poor infection control

Ototoxic chemotherapies: Antineoplastic agents*

- In some cases life-threatening diseases need to be treated with powerful medication
- Cisplatin (most common agent used today)
- Carboplatin (2nd generation, less toxic)
- Nitrogen mustard
- Bleomycin
- Dactinomycin
- Vincristine

*All have ototoxic potential, especially when given in combination

Use of Antineoplastic agents in treating cancers

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| – Bone | – Eyes |
| – Connective tissue and muscles | – Kidneys |
| – Brain and nerve tissues | – Adrenal glands |
| – Head and neck | – Lymph tissues |
| – Lungs | – Liver |
| | – Reproductive organ tissues |

Source: CureSearch, National Childhood Cancer Foundation & Children's Oncology Group, 2008; Mayo Clinic, 2008.

Auditory characteristics of ototoxicity

- Bilateral and often symmetrical SNHL
- Starts above 8000Hz, but may later spread to frequencies important for understanding conversational speech
- May occur soon after first dose and may continue several months after final dose
- Parents should recognize early signs/symptoms

Early recognition of childhood ototoxicity

- Difficulty communicating needs
- Ask for repetition
- Covers ears
- Change in speech/language development
- Difficulty hearing in a group eg. small play group, hearing teacher in class
- Put TV louder
- Have more difficulty hearing female voices than male voices
- Inattentive and problems in school

Early recognition of childhood ototoxicity

The “Pediatric Assessment of Hearing” questionnaire is developed by Jamie M. Baum (2008) as a *tool* to both screen and counsel for a high frequency sensorineural hearing loss (characteristic of ototoxicity)

See handout

Consequences of ototoxicity

- Difficulty hearing/discriminating high frequency speech sounds (s, f, th, k, p, h, sh, ch).
- Difficulty hearing speech over distance and in noise.
- Difficulty hearing morphological markers of speech (plurals, tense).
- Delay in speech and language development in young children.
- Increased risk for difficulty in school.
- Auditory processing difficulties

Stelmachowicz et al, Archives Otolaryngology
Head & Neck Surgery, 2004.

Managing ototoxicity: early detection and intervention

“Ototoxic hearing loss, particularly in the pediatric population, may be tolerated in favor of survival”

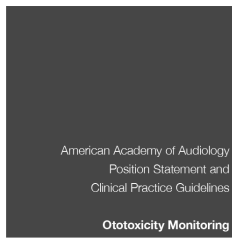
Konrad-Martin et al. (2005) ASHA Leader, 1-14

Managing ototoxicity: early detection and intervention

Yes, but...

Undetected and/or uncorrected hearing loss in early childhood can interfere with children’s normal speech and language development

Ototoxicity monitoring



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF AUDIOLOGY

Ototoxicity monitoring

Main purposes:

- **Early detection of changes in hearing**
- **Early intervention when hearing loss has occurred**

Ototoxicity monitoring: suggested procedures

- Tympanometry
- Pure tone audiometry
 - VRA (6-30 months)
 - play audiometry (24 months–6 years)
- DPOAE's (ototoxicity protocol – up to 10kHz)
- Extended high frequency audiometry (above 8kHz)
- ABR and HF ABR (sedation contra-indicated with other meds)

Ototoxicity monitoring: challenges

- Cooperation, attention, poor response reliability when child is ill
- Difficulty measuring HF audiometry in children younger than 5 years
- Middle ear pathology (immune compromised)
- Need for sedation to measure threshold ABR's (sedation may be contra-indicated)
- Need for quiet child when measuring DPOAE's.

Early detection

- Counseling / education of family of possibility of ototoxicity and consequences
- Why monitor? Inform treating physician of hearing changes to
 - Alternative Rx protocol
 - Reduce Rx dose
 - Change time of dosage schedule
 - Allow time for ear to “rest”

Early intervention

Purposes:

- Maintain effective communication
- Speech and language development
- Social-emotional development
- Academic success

Management of hearing loss

- Hearing aids
- Cochlear implants
- Assistive listening devices
- Educational and school support
- Parental/family support prior, during and beyond final treatment

Conclusion

- Survival rates for childhood cancers are improving
- Children under age 5 are 21x more susceptible to ototoxic hearing loss
- Priority is disease, but permanent hearing loss can be a traumatic discovery for family
- Early detection and intervention through monitoring may prepare family and help set realistic expectations

QUESTIONS?



References

- Albrecht, C. (2006). Overview of the South African cancer research environment as a basis for discussion concerning the activation of CARISA. www.sahealth.org/cancer (Accessed on 10 September 2008)
- American Academy of Audiology (2009). Position statement and clinical practice guidelines: Ototoxicity monitoring.
- Campbell, K.C.M. (2007). Pharmacology and ototoxicity for audiologists. Thomson Delmar Learning.
- Helt-Cameron, J. & Allen, P.J. (2009). Cisplatin ototoxicity in children: Implications for primary care providers. *Pediatric Nursing*, 35(2): 121-127.
- Jackson, O., Mwanda, O. & Scot, R. (2004). AIDS associated cancer in developing nations. *Current opinion in Oncology*, 16(5):468-476.
- Swanepoel, D.W. & Louw, B. (2010). *HIV/AIDS related communication, hearing and swallowing disorders*. Plural publishing: San Diego, Oxford, Brisbane.

References

- Konrad-Martin, D., Helt, W.J., Reavis, K.M., Gordon, J.S., Coleman, L.L., Bratt, G.W. & Fausti, S.A. (2005). Ototoxicity: Early detection and monitoring. www.asha.org/about/publications/leader-online/htm. (Accessed on 26 August 2008).
- Mqoqi, N., Kellet, P., Sitas, F. & Jula, M. (2004). Incidents of histologically diagnosed cancer in South Africa 1998-1999. South Africa: National Cancer Registry.
- Nagy, J.L., Adelstein, D.J., Newman, C.W., Rybicki, L.A., Rice, T.W. & Lavertu, P. (1990). Cisplatin ototoxicity: The importance of baseline audiometry. *American Journal of Clinical Oncology*, 22:305-308.
- Patel, P., Hanson, M.S., Sullivan, P.S., Novak, R.M., Moorman, A.C., Tong, T.C., Holmberg, S.C. & Brooks, J.T. (2008). Incidence of types of cancer among HIV-infected persons compared with the general population in the United States. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 148(10):728-736.
- Vasquez, R. & Mattucci, K.F. (2003). A proposed protocol for monitoring ototoxicity in patients who take cochlea- or vestibulotoxic drugs. *ENT Journal*, 82(3): 181-184.