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Pharmacokinetics of Adjusted-Dose Lopinavir-Ritonavir Combined with Rifampin in Healthy Volunteers


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Coadministration of lopinavir-ritonavir, an antiretroviral protease inhibitor, at the standard dose (400/100 mg twice a day [BID]) with the antituberculous agent rifampin is contraindicated because of a significant pharmacokinetic interaction due to induction of cytochrome P450 3A by rifampin. In the present study, two adjusted-dose regimens of lopinavir-ritonavir were tested in combination with rifampin. Thirty-two healthy subjects participated in a randomized, two-arm, open-label, multiple-dose, within-subject controlled study. All subjects were treated with lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID from days 1 to 15. From days 16 to 24, the subjects in arm 1 received lopinavir-ritonavir at 800/200 mg BID in a dose titration, and the subjects in arm 2 received lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID in a dose titration. Rifampin was given at 600 mg once daily to all subjects from days 11 to 24. The multiple-dose pharmacokinetics of lopinavir, ritonavir, and rifampin were assessed. Twelve of 32 subjects withdrew from the study. For nine subjects lopinavir-ritonavir combined with rifampin resulted in liver enzyme level elevations. Pharmacokinetic data for 19 subjects were evaluable. Geometric mean ratios for the lopinavir minimum concentration in serum and the maximum concentration in serum (Cmax) on day 24 versus that on day 10 were 0.43 (90% confidence interval [CI], 0.19 to 0.96) and 1.02 (90% CI, 0.85 to 1.23), respectively, for arm 1 (n = 10) and 1.03 (90% CI, 0.68 to 1.56) and 0.93 (90% CI, 0.81 to 1.07), respectively, for arm 2 (n = 9). Ritonavir exposure increased from days 10 to 24 in both arms. The geometric mean Cmax of rifampin was 13.5 mg/liter (day 24) and was similar between the two arms. Adjusted-dose regimens of lopinavir-ritonavir in combination with therapeutic drug monitoring and monitoring of liver function may allow concomitant use of rifampin.

The treatment of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-infected individuals has improved greatly over the past several years. With the development of antiretroviral agents in different classes, more options for the effective suppression of the virus have become available (6). However, many problems remain to be solved. One of them is the treatment of patients presenting with HIV infection and coinfections. Tuberculosis is a significant opportunistic infection in HIV-infected individuals in developing countries and, to a lesser extent, in developed countries (1, 3, 11, 15). For public health reasons, active tuberculosis must be treated immediately (3). The treatment of HIV infection at a standard dosage of 400/100 mg twice a day [BID] with the antituberculous agent rifampin is contraindicated because of a significant pharmacokinetic interaction due to induction of cytochrome P450 3A by rifampin. In the present study, two adjusted-dose regimens of lopinavir-ritonavir were tested in combination with rifampin. Thirty-two healthy subjects participated in a randomized, two-arm, open-label, multiple-dose, within-subject controlled study. All subjects were treated with lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID from days 1 to 15. From days 16 to 24, the subjects in arm 1 received lopinavir-ritonavir at 800/200 mg BID in a dose titration, and the subjects in arm 2 received lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID in a dose titration. Rifampin was given at 600 mg once daily to all subjects from days 11 to 24. The multiple-dose pharmacokinetics of lopinavir, ritonavir, and rifampin were assessed. Twelve of 32 subjects withdrew from the study. For nine subjects lopinavir-ritonavir combined with rifampin resulted in liver enzyme level elevations. Pharmacokinetic data for 19 subjects were evaluable. Geometric mean ratios for the lopinavir minimum concentration in serum and the maximum concentration in serum (Cmax) on day 24 versus that on day 10 were 0.43 (90% confidence interval [CI], 0.19 to 0.96) and 1.02 (90% CI, 0.85 to 1.23), respectively, for arm 1 (n = 10) and 1.03 (90% CI, 0.68 to 1.56) and 0.93 (90% CI, 0.81 to 1.07), respectively, for arm 2 (n = 9). Ritonavir exposure increased from days 10 to 24 in both arms. The geometric mean Cmax of rifampin was 13.5 mg/liter (day 24) and was similar between the two arms. Adjusted-dose regimens of lopinavir-ritonavir in combination with therapeutic drug monitoring and monitoring of liver function may allow concomitant use of rifampin.

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mg twice a day (BID) in combination with other antiretrovirals. The coformulation of lopinavir-ritonavir is available as capsules with a dose of 133 mg of lopinavir and 33 mg of ritonavir per capsule. Lopinavir is mainly dependent on CYP3A for its metabolism, and ritonavir is a strong inhibitor of CYP3A. For this reason, ritonavir is coformulated with lopinavir (Kaletra Product Information, 2000; Abbott Laboratories, Chicago, Ill.), resulting in sustained and elevated plasma lopinavir levels. The pharmacokinetic interaction between rifampin and lopinavir-ritonavir has been studied previously (R. Bertz, A. Hsu, W. Lam, L. Williams, C. Renz, M. D. Karol, S. Dutta, A. Carr, Y. Zhang, Q. Wang, S. Schweitzer, C. Foit, A. Andre, B. Bernstein, G. Granemann, and E. Sun, 5th Int. Congr. Drug Ther. HIV Infect., abstr. P291, 2000). The area under the concentration-time curve (AUC) and the minimum concentration in plasma (Cmin) for lopinavir in healthy subjects were reduced 75% and 99%, respectively, as a result of coadministration of rifampin at 600 mg once daily (QD) with lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID. This is the direct result of the strong induction of CYP3A by rifampin, which overcomes the inhibition of CYP3A by low-dose ritonavir. Therefore, rifampin combined with lopinavir-ritonavir in the standard-dose regimen is contraindicated. The objective of the present study was to investigate in healthy subjects the pharmacokinetics of two adjusted-dose regimens of lopinavir-ritonavir in combination with rifampin in comparison to the standard dose of lopinavir-ritonavir without rifampin.

**Materials and Methods**

**Study design.** The study was designed as a randomized, phase I, open-label, two-arm, within-subject controlled study with 32 healthy subjects, both males and females. See Table 1 for details of the study design. The study consisted of a run-in period of 10 days in which lopinavir-ritonavir at the standard dose (400/100 mg BID as three coformulated capsules) was given to all subjects. On study day 10, the steady-state pharmacokinetics of lopinavir and ritonavir were determined over the daytime 12-h dosing interval. During study days 11 to 15, subjects were dosed with lopinavir-ritonavir at 600 mg QD and rifampin at 600 mg BID at 800/200 mg BID and 800/300 mg BID, respectively. The subjects continued fasting (no food or beverages) until 5 h after drug intake, at which time the subjects received a standardized lunch. The subjects received a standardized snack at 9 h following drug ingestion, and dinner was served at the last blood draw. Beverages (i.e., water, orange juice, apple juice, coffee, tea, and milk) were allowed ad libitum from 5 h after dosing until the end of the confinement period.

**Choice of subjects.** This study was performed with healthy subjects. The inclusion criteria were the ability to sign voluntary informed consent; age 18 years or older; good health (i.e., the subject was not suffering from an acute or chronic illness and was not using medications); and a body mass index (BMI) lower than 30.0 for men and lower than 28.6 for women (body mass index is equal to weight [in kilograms]/height2 [in square meters]). Female subjects could not be of childbearing potential, defined as being postmenopausal for at least 1 year or surgically sterile (by bilateral tubal ligation, bilateral oophorectomy, or hysterectomy), or could be of childbearing potential but practicing one of the following methods of birth control: condoms, sponge, foams, jellies, diaphragm or intrauterine device, vasectomy for the sexual partner, or total abstinence from sexual intercourse. Exclusion criteria were as follows: known hypersensitivity to lopinavir, ritonavir, or rifampin; positive test result for HIV; positive test result for hepatitis B or C virus; a tuberculin skin test reaction more than 15 mm or a tuberculin skin test reaction of 1 to 15 mm with a chest X-ray with abnormalities consistent with tuberculosis; pregnancy or breastfeeding; body weight <50 kg; use of contact lenses; a history of pancreatitis; a history of alcohol abuse; and one or more of the following laboratory test results: hemoglobin concentration, <7.5 g/dL; leukocyte count, <3 × 109/Liter; aspartate aminotransferase (ASAT) and alanine aminotransferase (ALAT) levels more than twice the upper limit of normal (ULN); γ-glutamyltransferase (GGT) levels more than twice the ULN; alkaline phosphatase levels more than twice the ULN; serum creatine levels more than 1.5 times the ULN (pancreatic) amylase levels more than twice the ULN; or total bilirubin levels more than twice the ULN.

**Blood sampling procedure.** For determination of lopinavir and ritonavir concentrations, blood samples (5 mL) were collected predosing and at 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 h postdosing on days 10 and 24. Rifampin concentrations were determined with the same samples used for determination of lopinavir and ritonavir concentrations on day 24. However, additional blood samples (5 mL) for the more precise determination of the maximum concentration in plasma (Cmax) for rifampin were drawn at 1 and 3 h postdosing on day 24. The subjects returned to the study location on study days 1, 3, 7, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, and 22 for predose blood sampling (5 mL) for determination of lopinavir and ritonavir concentrations. Blood samples were centrifuged at approximately 1,000 × g for 10 min at 4°C. Plasma for determination of lopinavir and ritonavir concentrations was transferred to a labeled polypropylene tube and stored at ≤−18°C within 2 h after collection. Plasma for determination of rifampin concentrations was transferred to a labeled polypropylene tube containing ascorbic acid and was stored at ≤−80°C within 2 h after collection.

**Pharmacokinetic analysis.** The study subjects were confined on the day prior to blood draw (days 9 and 23) until after the last blood draw on study days 10 and 24. From the day before the start of confinement, the subjects were not allowed to consume alcohol. During confinement, subjects consumed only the standardized scheduled meals and beverages provided at the research unit. The subjects fasted from midnight on study days 9 and 23 to the time of breakfast on study days 10 and 24. Water intake was not allowed from 1 h before until 2 h after drug intake. The study medication was taken orally after breakfast (550 kcal, 25% fat) with 200 mL of noncarbonated water. After the intake of medication the subjects had to remain in an upright position for at least 2 h. After dosing, the subjects continued fasting (no food or beverages) until 5 h after drug intake, at which time the subjects received a standardized lunch. The subjects received a standardized snack at 9 h following drug ingestion, and dinner was served after the last blood draw. Beverages (i.e., water, orange juice, apple juice, coffee, tea, and milk) were allowed ad libitum from 5 h after dosing until the end of the confinement period.

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Bioanalysis. Plasma lopinavir and ritonavir levels were determined by a validated high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) method, which was a modified version of a previously published method (9). The modification consisted of a switch of the UV detection wavelength from 245 to 215 nm at 15.5 min, and a change from 14.4 min for ritonavir, and the lower limit of quantification was 0.04 mg/liter for both lopinavir and ritonavir. Rates of recovery after extraction from plasma were 95% for lopinavir and 94% for ritonavir. The accuracies ranged from 99 to 101% for lopinavir and from 92 to 100% for ritonavir, and the intraday precisions ranged from 0.92 to 5.16% for lopinavir and from 1.51 to 5.14% for ritonavir. The interday precisions ranged from 0 to 1.57% for lopinavir and from 0 to 5.00% for ritonavir.

Plasma rifampin levels were measured by a validated HPLC method that was developed in the University Medical Centre Nijmegen but that has not yet been published. The method consisted of protein precipitation followed by reversed-phase HPLC with UV detection. Two hundred microliters of acetonitrile was added to 200 μl of plasma to precipitate protein. This mixture was vortexed for 20 s, and afterwards the mixture was centrifuged for 5 min. Fifty microliters of the clear supernatant was used for injection. Chromatographic analysis was performed on an Inertsil 5 ODS 2 analytical column (250 by 4.6 mm [inner diameter]; Varian, Begur, Spain) protected with a Chrom- guard HPLC column (10 by 3 mm [inner diameter]; Varian). The mobile phase was a mixture of 0.1 M potassium dihydrogen phosphate (62%) and acetonitrile (38%). The flow rate was 1 ml/min, and the wavelength for UV detection was 334 nm. The rifampin retention time was 7.3 min. The rifampin calibration curve was linear over a range of 0.50 to 30.0 mg/liter. The lower limit of quantification for rifampin was 0.50 mg/liter. Recovery after extraction from plasma was 108.5%. Accuracy ranged from 101.3 to 102.2%, and intraday and interday precisions ranged from 2.84 to 3.65% and from 1.59 to 3.68%, respectively.

Safety monitoring and laboratory safety. The medical history, vital signs, a physical examination, and an electrocardiogram for each subject were obtained at screening. Laboratory tests were done at screening and all study visits (days 1, 3, 7, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, and 24). Laboratory tests included tests for sodium, potassium, creatinine, total bilirubin, cholesterol, triglycerides, glucose, alkaline phosphatase, ASAT, ALAT, GGT, and amylase (pancreatic) levels; a whole-blood count; and urinalysis.

Subjects. Thirty-two subjects (18 males, 14 females) were included in the study, of which 20 completed the study. Twelve subjects dropped out for reasons of adverse events or laboratory abnormalities. Data for all 32 subjects participating in the study were included in the safety analyses. Pharmacokinetic data for 1 of the 20 subjects who completed the study were not evaluable due to vomiting shortly after drug administration on day 24. For this reason, statistical analyses for pharmacokinetic were performed with data for 19 subjects, 10 in arm 1 and 9 in arm 2.

The 10 subjects in arm 1 (4 males, 6 females) had a mean age of 37 years (range, 22 to 70 years), a mean height of 1.70 m (range, 1.61 to 1.85 m), and a mean weight of 70.6 kg (range, 61.5 to 77.0 kg). Of these 10 subjects, 1 was black; all others were Caucasian.

The nine subjects in arm 2 (7 males, 2 females) had a mean age of 36 years (range, 25 to 47 years), a mean height of 1.80 m (range, 1.58 to 1.90 m), and a mean weight of 75.4 kg (range, 60.5 to 85.4 kg). All nine subjects in arm 2 were Caucasian.

Lopinavir pharmacokinetics. Figure 1 shows the arithmetic mean ± standard deviation trough lopinavir levels in plasma in the morning obtained during the study. Trough lopinavir levels were not statistically different between days 7 and 10, suggesting that in both arms steady state was reached after 10 days of treatment with lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg Bid (P = 0.5 and P = 0.5 for comparison of C0s on day 7 versus that on day 10 for arms 1 and 2, respectively). On study day 16 (when lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg Bid was combined with rifampin at 600 mg OD), trough lopinavir levels decreased 93% in arm 1 and 90% in arm 2 in comparison to those on study day 10. Trough lopinavir levels increased in both study arms after lopinavir-ritonavir dosages were titrated to 800/200 mg Bid in arm 1 and 400/400 mg Bid in arm 2 and administered in combination with rifampin at 600 mg OD (days 18, 20, 22, and 24). Trough lopinavir levels in plasma were not statistically different between days 22 and 24, suggesting that steady state was reached (P = 0.7 and P = 0.15 for comparison of C0s
on day 22 versus those on day 24 for arms 1 and 2, respectively.

The values for the lopinavir pharmacokinetic parameters are summarized in Table 2. Arithmetic means ± standard deviations and geometric means are included for study days 10 and 24 for both arm 1 and arm 2. Note that these geometric means result in values different from the arithmetic means in Fig. 1 and 2. The P values for the within-subject differences between days 10 and 24 are presented in Table 2 as well. Table 2 also presents the geometric mean ratio (day 24/day 10) and the 90% confidence interval for AUC12, Cmin, C0, and Cmax. For arm 1 (n = 10; lopinavir-ritonavir at 800/200 mg BID in combination with rifampin at 600 mg QD), no statistically significant differences were observed between the values of the pharmacokinetic parameters for days 10 and 24. Due to intersubject variability, the geometric mean ratio and matching confidence interval met the criteria for bioequivalence only for Cmax. Geometric mean ratios for Cmin and C0 showed decreases of 57 and 54%, respectively, from days 10 to 24, and the lopinavir AUC12 for arm 1 decreased by 16%. The total variability (coefficient of variation) in the lopinavir Cmin in arm 1 was 28% on day 10, whereas it was 81% on day 24. Figure 2 displays the arithmetic mean plasma-concentration time profiles for lopinavir in arm 1 for both study day 10 and study day 24. The error bars in Fig. 2 show this larger variability on day 24.

In arm 2 (n = 9; lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID in combination with rifampin at 600 mg QD), the geometric mean ratios and their matching confidence intervals meet the criteria for bioequivalence only for Cmax. The values for the lopinavir pharmacokinetic parameters are summarized in Table 2. Although the geometric mean ratios are within 11% of unity for Cmin (+3%) and C0 (−11%), the 90% confidence intervals for the geometric mean ratios of Cmin and C0 exceed both the upper and the lower limits of the predefined bioequivalence range of 0.80 to 1.25. No statistically significant differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study arm and day and pharmacokinetic parameter</th>
<th>AUC12 (mg·h/L, 90% CI)</th>
<th>Cmax (mg/L, 90% CI)</th>
<th>Cmin (mg/L, 90% CI)</th>
<th>C0 (mg/L, 90% CI)</th>
<th>T1/2 (h, 90% CI)</th>
<th>CL/F kg (liter/h·kg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arm 1 Day 10</td>
<td>111.8 (104.3, 119.1)</td>
<td>7.6 (6.7, 8.8)</td>
<td>5.5 (4.8, 6.4)</td>
<td>13.2 (10.9, 16.2)</td>
<td>1.83 (1.6, 2.0)</td>
<td>0.06 (0.05, 0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arm 1 Day 24</td>
<td>104.2 (97.8, 111.0)</td>
<td>7.6 (6.7, 8.8)</td>
<td>5.5 (4.8, 6.4)</td>
<td>13.2 (10.9, 16.2)</td>
<td>1.83 (1.6, 2.0)</td>
<td>0.06 (0.05, 0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arm 2 Day 10</td>
<td>102.4 (97.0, 107.9)</td>
<td>6.9 (6.2, 7.7)</td>
<td>5.2 (4.5, 6.0)</td>
<td>12.3 (10.8, 13.8)</td>
<td>1.88 (1.6, 2.1)</td>
<td>0.06 (0.05, 0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arm 2 Day 24</td>
<td>100.2 (94.9, 105.6)</td>
<td>6.9 (6.2, 7.7)</td>
<td>5.2 (4.5, 6.0)</td>
<td>12.3 (10.8, 13.8)</td>
<td>1.88 (1.6, 2.1)</td>
<td>0.06 (0.05, 0.08)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

AUC12 values are medians (interquartile ranges). Cmin, C0, and T1/2 are geometric means (90% confidence intervals). Geometric mean ratios for days 10 and 24 are summarized in Table 2. The P values for the within-subject differences between days 10 and 24 are presented in Table 2 as well.

FIG. 1. Trough lopinavir levels throughout the study. Treatments were as follows: days 1 to 10, lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID; days 11 to 15, lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID plus rifampin; days 16 and 17, lopinavir-ritonavir dose escalation plus rifampin; days 18 to 24, lopinavir-ritonavir at 800/200 mg BID plus rifampin for arm 1 and lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID plus rifampin for arm 2. *Arm 1 (n = 10); □, arm 2 (n = 9). Data are presented as arithmetic means, and error bars indicate standard deviations.
between the values of the pharmacokinetic parameters obtained on days 10 and 24 were observed. The total variabilities (coefficients of variation) in lopinavir $C_{\text{min}}$, in arm 2 on days 10 and 24 were 36 and 46%, respectively. Figure 2 displays the arithmetic mean plasma-concentration time profiles for lopinavir in arm 2 for both study day 10 and study day 24. The error bars in Fig. 2 represent the standard deviation of the mean and show variabilities of the same magnitude on both study days.

**Ritonavir pharmacokinetics.** The values of the steady-state pharmacokinetic parameters for ritonavir are summarized in Table 3. Arithmetic means ± standard deviations and geometric means are included for study days 10 and 24 for both arm 1 and arm 2. The $P$ values for the within-subject differences between days 10 and 24 are displayed as well. The geometric mean ratio (day 24/day 10) and 90% confidence interval are given for AUC$_{12}$, $C_{\text{min}}$, $C_{\text{op}}$, and $C_{\text{max}}$. Geometric mean ratios in arm 1 showed increases in AUC$_{12}$, $C_{\text{min}}$, $C_{\text{op}}$, and $C_{\text{max}}$ of 42, 11, 17, and 75%, respectively, with an increase in the ritonavir dosage from 100 to 200 mg BID from days 10 to 24. A statistically significant difference in the ritonavir $C_{\text{max}}$ was found between study days 10 and 24 ($P = 0.01$). No statistically significant differences in $C_{\text{min}}$, $C_{\text{op}}$, and AUC$_{12}$ were observed.

In arm 2, geometric mean ratios showed increases in the ritonavir AUC$_{12}$, $C_{\text{min}}$, $C_{\text{op}}$, and $C_{\text{max}}$ of 7.1-, 4.9-, 4.7-, and 8.4-fold, respectively, with the increase in the ritonavir dosage from 100 to 400 mg BID from days 10 to 24. These differences were statistically significant for AUC$_{12}$, $C_{\text{min}}$, $C_{\text{op}}$, and $C_{\text{max}}$ from days 10 to 24 ($P < 0.001$ for all comparisons) (Table 3).

No significant differences in $T_{\text{max}}$ or $t_{1/2}$ were observed in either arm.

**Rifampin pharmacokinetics.** The values of the steady-state pharmacokinetic parameters for rifampin on day 24 are pre-
sented in Table 4. Arithmetic means ± standard deviations and geometric means are displayed. Data are grouped by study arm; arm 1 denotes lopinavir-ritonavir at 800/200 mg BID in combination with rifampin at 600 mg OD, and arm 2 denotes lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID in combination with rifampin at 600 mg OD. No statistically significant differences in rifampin pharmacokinetics between arms 1 and 2 were found.

Adverse events. Most (87%) of the adverse events were mild. Three adverse events (not related to a study medication) were reported to be severe; these were cases of gastroenteritis, influenza, and headache. Serious adverse events did not occur.

Twelve of 32 subjects (38%) were prematurely discontinued from the study; 3 of these subjects discontinued the study prior to randomization (while receiving lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID alone). One subject was prematurely discontinued from the study for grade 2 total bilirubin level elevations (>31 μmol/liter), which predominantly consisted of indirect bilirubin. However, this subject did not have concurrent grade 2+ ALAT, ASAT, or alkaline phosphatase level elevations. One additional subject was prematurely discontinued from the study for grade 3 elevations in cholesterol levels (>7.77 mmol/liter) and triglyceride levels (>8.48 mmol/liter), both of which subsequently declined to below grade 3 elevations following discontinuation of the study medication. A third subject was prematurely discontinued from the study for a complex of vomiting and abdominal pain. These complaints disappeared after the study medication was discontinued. There were half as many subject discontinuations in arm 1 (lorpinavir-ritonavir at 800/200 mg BID and rifampin at 600 mg OD; three subjects discontinued the medication; one subject developed grade 2 elevations in ASAT, ALAT, and GGT levels; one subject developed a grade 2 elevation in ASAT levels and a grade 3 elevation in ALAT levels; and one subject suffered from vomiting and diarrhea) as in arm 2 (lorpinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID with rifampin at 600 mg OD; six subjects discontinued the medication; three subjects developed grade 2 elevations in ASAT and ALT levels; two subjects developed grade 2 elevations in ALT levels; and one subject suffered from nausea, abdominal pain, fatigue, shivers, and increased sweating).

During the study, six subjects (two in arm 1, four in arm 2) had grade 2 elevations in ALT levels (>2.6 times the ULN) and three subjects (one in arm 1, two in arm 2) had grade 3 elevations in ALT levels (>5.1 times the ULN). Five of these subjects experienced concurrent grade 2 elevations in ASAT levels (>2.6 times the ULN). Seven of the nine subjects with grade 2 to 3 elevations in ALT levels (two in arm 1, five in arm 2) were prematurely discontinued from the study. The other two subjects developed elevations in liver enzyme levels on or after study day 24.

The onset of all grade 2 or 3 elevations in ALAT and ASAT levels was after the initiation of rifampin treatment, but none of these were associated with grade 2+ elevations in total bilirubin or alkaline phosphatase levels. After discontinuation of the study medication, all such elevations declined below those for grade 2 toxicity, with only two remaining above the ULN at the final study evaluation.

Laboratory measurements. The mean change from the baseline values to the maximum values as well as the mean change from the baseline values to the final values was determined for a number of laboratory parameters. The baseline was day 1 for the period from day 1 to 10, and the baseline was day 10 for the period from days 11 to 24. For ASAT, the mean changes from the baseline value (day 10) to the maximum value (final value) were 39.9 (2.4) and 39.9 (1.1) IU/liter in arms 1 and 2, respectively, for study days 11 to 24. For ALAT, the mean changes from the baseline value (day 10) to the maximum value (final value) were 72.6 (13.5) and 89.3 (6.9) IU/liter in arms 1 and 2, respectively, for study days 11 to 24. For alkaline phosphatase, the mean changes from the baseline value (day 10) to the maximum value (final value) were 12.9 (3.0) and 16.3 (5.0) IU/liter in arms 1 and 2, respectively, for study days 11 to 24. No clinically relevant changes in ASAT, ALT, and alkaline phosphatase levels were seen on study days 1 to 10 (lorpinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID alone). For total bilirubin, the mean change from the baseline value (day 1) to the maximum value (final value) was 10 (4.7) μmol/liter for study days 1 to 10. For study days 11 to 24, the mean changes in the total bilirubin level from the baseline value (day 10) to the maximum value (final value) were 0.9 (−9.1) and 1.3 (−3.9) μmol/liter in study arms 1 and 2, respectively.

**DISCUSSION**

In the present study, two adjusted-dose regimens of lopinavir-ritonavir in combination with rifampin were compared to the standard dose of lopinavir-ritonavir without rifampin. The steady-state pharmacokinetics of lopinavir and ritonavir were determined after 10 days of treatment with the standard dose of lopinavir-ritonavir (400/100 mg BID). In the second part of the study, the steady-state pharmacokinetics of lopinavir-ritonavir at 800/200 mg BID with rifampin at 600 mg OD (arm 1) and lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID with rifampin at 600 mg OD (arm 2) were assessed.

**Lopinavir.** Lopinavir exposure was substantially higher in both study arms compared to the historical data obtained for lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID in combination with rifampin at 600 mg OD. This historical interaction study with a standard dose of lopinavir-ritonavir with rifampin was conducted with 22 healthy subjects to assess the effects of multiple

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**TABLE 4. Steady-state pharmacokinetics of rifampin on study day 24**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arm</th>
<th>AUC12 (mg h/liter)</th>
<th>Cmax (mg/liter)</th>
<th>Tmax (h)</th>
<th>t1/2 (h)</th>
<th>CL/F · kg (liter/h · kg)</th>
<th>V/F · kg (liter/kg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arm 1</td>
<td>79.2 ± 33.84 (72.2)</td>
<td>14.2 ± 5.61 (13.0)</td>
<td>4.0 (3.0–4.0)</td>
<td>3.1 ± 1.75 (2.8)</td>
<td>0.12 ± 0.06 (0.11)</td>
<td>0.45 ± 0.16 (0.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arm 2</td>
<td>76.6 ± 31.87 (70.3)</td>
<td>15.0 ± 3.80 (14.5)</td>
<td>4.0 (3.0–4.0)</td>
<td>2.5 ± 1.33 (2.2)</td>
<td>0.11 ± 0.06 (0.10)</td>
<td>0.34 ± 0.10 (0.33)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Arm 1 (n = 10), lopinavir-ritonavir at 800/200 mg BID; arm 2 (n = 9), lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID.  
  a Values are arithmetic means ± standard deviations (geometric means) unless indicated otherwise.  
  b Values are medians (interquartile ranges).
doses of rifampin at 600 mg QD on the pharmacokinetics of lopinavir after treatment with lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID. The values of the pharmacokinetic parameters for lopinavir were substantially reduced by the coadministration of lopinavir-ritonavir with rifampin, as follows: $C_{\text{max}}$ by 45%, $AUC$ by 75%, and $C_{\text{min}}$ by 99% (Bertz et al., 5th Int. Congr. Drug Ther. HIV Infect., abstr. P291, 2000).

While the concentrations of lopinavir are dramatically increased when lopinavir-ritonavir is used in combination with rifampin with both of the dosing regimens, it could not be demonstrated that the adjusted-dose regimens with rifampin evaluated in the present study were equivalent, particularly with respect to $C_{\text{min}}$, to the standard dose of lopinavir-ritonavir without rifampin. This indicates that the adjusted-dose regimens may in some cases not be capable of completely compensating for the accelerated metabolism of lopinavir by rifampin. Data are also limited by the relatively small number of subjects who completed the study and for whom pharmacokinetic data were evaluable. However, the level of lopinavir exposure in arm 2 was more comparable to that obtained with a standard dose lopinavir-ritonavir without rifampin than was the level of lopinavir exposure in arm 1. The pharmacokinetics of lopinavir in arm 1 were more variable than those in arm 2. It could be that the higher dose of ritonavir given in arm 2 (400 mg BID) resulted in a more consistent inhibition of lopinavir metabolism compared to that achieved with the ritonavir dose given in arm 1 (200 mg BID). Note that on study day 24, a total metabolism compared to that achieved with the ritonavir dose 400 mg BID) resulted in a more consistent inhibition of lopinavir without ritonavir. This indicates that the adjusted-dose regimens may in some cases not be capable of completely compensating for the accelerated metabolism of lopinavir by rifampin. Data are also limited by the relatively small number of subjects who completed the study and for whom pharmacokinetic data were evaluable. However, the level of lopinavir exposure in arm 2 was more comparable to that obtained with a standard dose lopinavir-ritonavir without rifampin than was the level of lopinavir exposure in arm 1. The pharmacokinetics of lopinavir in arm 1 were more variable than those in arm 2. It could be that the higher dose of ritonavir given in arm 2 (400 mg BID) resulted in a more consistent inhibition of lopinavir metabolism compared to that achieved with the ritonavir dose given in arm 1 (200 mg BID). Note that on study day 24, a total of 4 of 10 subjects (40%) in arm 1 had a $C_{\text{min}}$ lower than the lowest value observed on study day 10 ($C_{\text{min}} < 3.7$ mg/liter). In contrast, only one of the nine subjects (11%) in arm 2 had a $C_{\text{min}}$ lower than the lowest value observed on study day 10 ($C_{\text{min}} < 3.1$ mg/liter). The study was not designed to show a difference in lopinavir exposures between study arms. However, by taking into account the greater variability in lopinavir pharmacokinetics in arm 1, therapeutic drug monitoring might prove to be useful in clinical practice to monitor for possible subtherapeutic $C_{\text{min}}$ of lopinavir in plasma and individually optimize the lopinavir-ritonavir dosing regimen in a given patient. In arm 2, the $C_{\text{min}}$ of lopinavir in plasma tended to be higher, possibly making therapeutic drug monitoring of less importance.

**Ritonavir.** For ritonavir, it is apparent that in arm 1 a two-fold increase in the ritonavir dose from 200 mg/day in the absence of rifampin to 400 mg/day in the presence of rifampin resulted in a less than proportional increase in plasma ritonavir concentrations. In arm 2, considerably higher plasma ritonavir concentrations were achieved during treatment with lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID in combination with rifampin compared to those achieved with lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/100 mg BID alone. In fact, when ritonavir is administered in combination with lopinavir, the ritonavir $C_{\text{max}}$ and AUC increase more than proportionally due to nonlinear pharmacokinetics (8) when the total daily dose is increased fourfold from 200 mg/day in the absence of rifampin to 800 mg/day in the presence of rifampin. The ritonavir AUC was approximately fourfold higher when lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID was coadministered with rifampin than when lopinavir-ritonavir at 800/200 mg BID was coadministered with rifampin. These observed effects of ritonavir exposure indicate that the inhibition of CYP3A by ritonavir is more complete and less subject to induction by rifampin when ritonavir is dosed at 400 mg BID than when it is dosed at 200 mg BID.

**Rifampin.** Data for rifampin in the literature (2) report a mean $C_{\text{max}}$ and a mean AUC of 8 to 20 mg/liter and 60 to 80 mg · h/liter, respectively. The mean values for $C_{\text{max}}$ and AUC observed in this study are within these ranges (Table 4). This indicates that lopinavir-ritonavir does not affect the pharmacokinetics of rifampin. The fact that no statistically significant differences in the pharmacokinetic parameters for rifampin were observed between arm 1 and arm 2, as shown in Table 4, provides further evidence that these different doses of lopinavir and ritonavir had no influence on rifampin exposure. The literature also reports (2, 12) that rifampin intake with food can decrease the rifampin $C_{\text{max}}$. It is noteworthy that in the present study rifampin was administered with lopinavir-ritonavir at breakfast (550 kcal, 28% fat). Nevertheless, in this study the rifampin $C_{\text{max}}$ did not show the decrease that has been reported before. Data in the literature indicate that the $T_{\text{max}}$ is 1.5 to 2 h under fasting conditions. In a trial studying the single-dose pharmacokinetics of rifampin under fasting conditions (12), with food, and with antacids, the observed $T_{\text{max}}$ was 4.43 h after a high-fat breakfast (792 kcal, 57% fat). In the present study, the median $T_{\text{max}}$ was about 4 h in both study arms; this delay of $T_{\text{max}}$ was probably the result of the intake with food. However, in clinical practice, the rifampin $C_{\text{max}}$ is the main pharmacokinetic parameter of interest (2). Therefore, the clinical relevance of the delay in $T_{\text{max}}$ is limited, as in the present study the mean $C_{\text{max}}$ were well within the previously reported ranges (2).

**Safety.** The most common adverse events, reported by >50% of subjects, included urine discoloration, which is a known effect of rifampin therapy (5); nausea; headache; diarrhea; abdominal pain and cramps; and fatigue. The majority of all adverse events were mild (87%), with approximately 13% judged to be of moderate severity and only three events (gastroenteritis, influenza, and headache) reported to be severe. None of the adverse events met the regulatory definition of serious. A number of subjects had to discontinue the study prematurely due to elevations in liver function test results, with the onset of the elevations occurring after the initiation of combination lopinavir-ritonavir and rifampin dosing. A greater number of discontinuations occurred among the subjects in the arm receiving lopinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID plus rifampin at 600 mg QD. However, the study design did not allow an assessment of whether the frequency or magnitude of the elevations in the liver function test results seen with lopinavir-ritonavir in combination with rifampin was different between the study arms. No clinically significant hematologic or urinalysis values were observed in the study.

Overall, tolerability limitations were observed with the coadministration of lopinavir-ritonavir and rifampin in healthy subjects. The high rate of discontinuations observed was primarily a result of the elevations in the liver function test results that occurred after the initiation of lopinavir-ritonavir and rifampin coadministration. However, there was no dosing segment with rifampin alone to allow determination of whether the liver function test abnormalities observed during combination lopinavir-ritonavir and rifampin treatment were of a greater magnitude or incidence than would have been observed with rifampin administration alone to healthy subjects.
Nevertheless, the increased rate of elevations in hepatic transaminase levels seen in both combination-treatment arms warrants the use of caution when these two drugs are administered concurrently to patients infected with both HIV and M. tuberculosis.

Conclusions. The present recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that rifampin can be used in conjunction with efavirenz at 800 mg QD (4). The combination of efavirenz with rifampin has been studied in a group of 24 HIV-infected patients coinfected with M. tuberculosis (10). Other combination regimens that have been considered for use for the simultaneous treatment of HIV and M. tuberculosis infections are limited.

The combination of saquinavir-ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID with rifampin, as mentioned in the Introduction, has its parallels with the combination evaluated in the present study. However, data for the saquinavir-ritonavir combination was only presented as a case report.

The product Trizivir combines three NRTIs, namely, zidovudine, lamivudine, and abacavir, and could be an option for use in combination with rifampin. Nevertheless, the pharmacokinetics of this combination of NRTIs in combination with rifampin were not studied, and recently, this combination of NRTIs was shown to be less effective than an efavirenz-based regimen (7) and therefore will not be an option of first choice.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines also suggest the use of rifabutin (3, 4). However, complex bidirectional interactions are to be expected when rifabutin is combined with PIs (2). To compensate for these interactions, rifabutin doses must be decreased in some cases, or the PIs should be given at higher doses to compensate for accelerated metabolism. The combination of rifabutin with the NNRTIs efavirenz and delavirdine results in pharmacokinetic interactions as well (4); however, nevirapine can be used in combination with rifabutin, although no data from clinical studies have been published (4). It was reported from a study with HIV-infected inmates during a tuberculosis outbreak in a prison that, regardless of the rifabutin dosage, rifabutin concentrations are highly unpredictable, probably due to drug-drug interactions (16). From these data it becomes clear that the combination of rifabutin with PIs or NNRTIs remains a therapeutic challenge.

The presently studied combination of lopinavir-ritonavir, dosed as either 800/200 mg BID or 400/400 mg BID with rifampin, may be considered for the treatment of HIV-infected persons who are coinfected with M. tuberculosis. The toxicity observed when higher-dose lopinavir-ritonavir and rifampin were administered together led to discontinuation in 31% (9 of 29) of the healthy subjects during this study. When these drugs are used to treat patients who use other heptatically metabolized drugs, who are receiving long-term chronic treatment, and who have concomitant disease, the adverse event profile observed in the present study might even worsen. Therefore, the treatment of HIV-infected patients with tuberculosis with these agents should be approached with caution, and close monitoring of liver function will be needed. Therapeutic monitoring of the pharmacokinetics of lopinavir may be useful for the detection of minimal levels in plasma that are markedly below the expected mean, particularly in those patients treated with 800/200 mg BID, as well as to optimize the dosing regimen of lopinavir-ritonavir in combination with rifampin. If therapeutic drug monitoring is not possible, the combination of lopinavir and ritonavir at 400/400 mg BID may be preferred, although the rates of elevations in liver function test results achieved with that regimen tended to be higher than those achieved with the lopinavir-ritonavir regimen of 800/200 mg BID.

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