



# Valganciclovir: an option in the treatment of citomegalovirus disease in haematological patients

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## BACKGROUND

Ganciclovir (Cymevene®) has traditionally been the drug of choice for the treatment of citomegalovirus disease; it should be administered intravenously because it has low bioavailability. The development of the highly bioavailable prodrug, valganciclovir (Valcyte®), has provided an oral option for citomegalovirus disease.

## PURPOSE

Evaluated valganciclovir as an alternative in sequential therapy in haematological patients treated with ganciclovir (use off-label).

## METHODS

- Retrospective observational study of 2 years (July 2009 - July 2011).
- We included all haematological patients hospitalized who had received treatment with ganciclovir.
- Data were collected:
  - ✓ Age
  - ✓ Sex
  - ✓ Haematological disease
  - ✓ Ganciclovir (dosage and duration)
  - ✓ Previous treatment
  - ✓ Switch to valganciclovir
  - ✓ Date for discharge

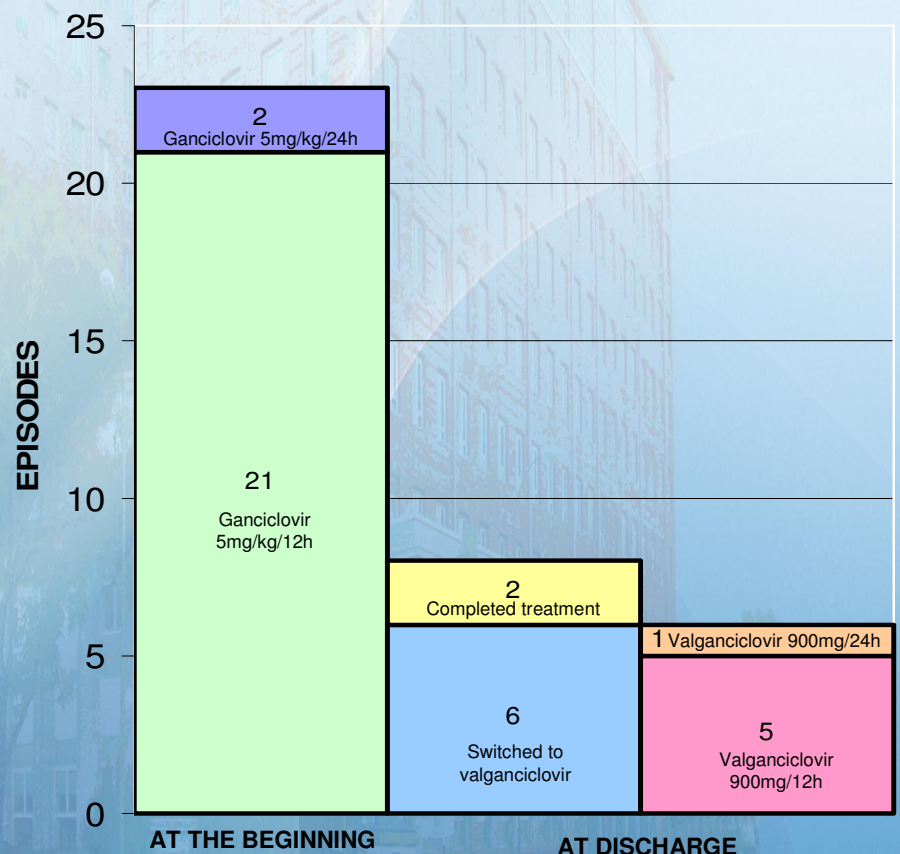
## RESULTS

✓ **23 episodes** of treatment with ganciclovir involved 21 patients (57,4% men).

✓ **Median age:** 52 years.

✓ **The most common haematological disease:** non-Hodgkin lymphoma (9 patients), acute myeloid leukemia (5 patients).

✓ 12 episodes required treatment discontinuation with ganciclovir and administered foscarnet (Foscavir®) because ganciclovir was associated with leukopenia.



## CONCLUSIONS

- ✓ Valganciclovir can be the oral alternative to ganciclovir in treatment of citomegalovirus disease in haematological patients; it does not require hospitalization for administration.
- ✓ The main limitation on the use of ganciclovir was leukopenia associated, it requires use other alternatives such as foscarnet in the treatment of cytomegalovirus disease.