

13668 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

DIABETIC TREATMENT AND SURVIVORSHIP

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The comparison of treatment for a disorder can only be evaluated through controlled randomized, clinical trials.

Hints and leads from retrospective studies can be extremely valuable in leading to a new hypothesis and may be the basis of justification of a randomized trial. However standing alone they cannot form the basis of any firm conclusions concerning treatment effects.

The preliminary analysis of our data of the incidence, prevalence and mortality of diabetes mellitus in Rochester, Minnesota between 1945 to 1970 contains some hints that survivorship may be lower in diabetics on oral antidiabetic agents, but group differences preclude any firm conclusions regarding this observation. Such an observation would point to the need for controlled randomized clinical trials to study the possible adverse effect of various treatments on survivorship in the diabetic.

The University Group Diabetes Program was a randomized trial study to evaluate the influence of treatment on diabetic complications. A statistically significant, adverse effect on survivorship was noted after patients had been on tolbutamide and phenformin for five or more years. These data have been reviewed and the conclusions have been found to be sound.

In my opinion, as a diabetologist, another randomized trial study of treatment in diabetes is not ethically justified,