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VAD-Doxil®/Thalomid® Confirmed Better than VAD-Doxil® for Myeloma
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Researchers from Greece have reported that VAD (vincristine, liposomal doxorubicin and dexamethasone)-Doxil plus Thalomid (thalidomide) improves response and progression-free survival rates in newly diagnosed patients with multiple myeloma. The details of this randomized study were published in the August, 2007 issue of *Annals of Oncology*.

Thalomid is an FDA approved drug for the treatment of patients with multiple myeloma. However, there are still many unanswered questions about the optimal use of this agent. More recent studies have focused on various combinations with Thalomid for initial induction therapy.

In the current clinical trial, 232 newly diagnosed patients with multiple myeloma less than age 75 years were randomly allocated to receive VAD-Doxil with or without Thalomid. The following table summarizes the main findings of this trial.

	VAD-Doxil	VAD-Doxil-Thalomid
Number of Patients	115	117
PR or Better	62.6%	82.2%
PFS at 2 years	44.8%	58.9%
Survival	64.6%	77%

Overall toxicities were greater in the Thalomid group but grade 3-4 toxicities were similar. Unique toxicities to Thalomid included constipation, peripheral neuropathy, skin rash and edema. These authors suggested that Thalomid might improve survival.

Comments: Although the early administration of Thalomid may improve initial response and progression-free survival, it is not at all clear that this is better than using Thalomid in combination salvage regimens.

Reference: Zervas K, Mihou D, Katodritou E, et al. VAD-doxil versus VAD-doxil plus thalidomide as initial treatment for multiple myeloma: results of the Greek Myeloma Study Group. *Annals of Oncology*. 2007; 18:1369-1375.