

1 **The association of basal insulin treatment versus standard care with outcomes in anti-**
2 **GAD positive and –negative subjects. A post-hoc analysis of the ORIGIN-trial.**

3

4 **Short title: Anti-GAD positivity and cardiovascular outcomes**

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44 Abstract

45 We compared cardiovascular and other outcomes in patients with dysglycaemia with or
46 without anti-GAD antibodies participating in the ORIGIN (Outcome Reduction with Initial
47 Glargine Intervention) trial. Of the 12 537 participants, 8162 had anti-GAD measured at
48 baseline and 267 were anti-GAD positive. The effects of insulin glargine versus standard care
49 and of n-3 fatty acids supplements versus placebo were compared by testing the interaction of
50 the treatment effects and anti-GAD status. The effect of glargine on development of new
51 diabetes was assessed in participants without previous diabetes at baseline. The overall
52 incidence of outcomes did not differ between anti-GAD positive and anti-GAD negative
53 subjects. The incidence of the composite of cardiovascular death, nonfatal myocardial
54 infarction, or nonfatal stroke did not differ between anti-GAD positive participants
55 randomized to insulin glargine or to standard care, with a hazard ratio (HR) [95% confidence
56 interval (CI)] of 0.80 [0.44-1.44] or in anti-GAD negative participants with a HR of 1.07
57 [0.96-1.20] (P for interaction=0.20).

58

59 Trial Registration: clinicaltrials.gov Identifier: NCT00069784

60

61 **Keywords:** anti-GAD, type 2 diabetes, CVD

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63 Abbreviations:

64 ACE Angiotensin converting enzyme

65 ARB Angiotensin 2 receptor blocker

66 CVD Cardiovascular disease

67 GAD Glutamic acid dehydrogenase

68

69

70 Diabetes is a heterogeneous metabolic disorder with varying degrees of insulin resistance and
71 dysfunction of insulin secretion. Type 1 diabetes typically occurs due to autoimmune damage
72 to the insulin secreting islet cells, and affected patients often have circulating antibodies
73 directed towards islet cell antigens, most often glutamic acid decarboxylase (anti-GAD
74 antibodies). Type 2 diabetes are not due to autoimmunity, however a subset of subjects with
75 phenotypically type 2 diabetes have anti-GAD antibodies in their serum. Compared to
76 seronegative individuals, those with anti-GAD antibodies have more pronounced beta cell
77 dysfunction and less insulin resistance (1). Limited data suggest that cardiovascular
78 comorbidity and mortality in such individuals are comparable to that of other people with type
79 2 diabetes (2-6). However, the effect of different treatment regimens on clinical outcomes in
80 the subgroup that are anti-GAD positive remains poorly studied.

81 The ORIGIN (Outcome Reduction with Initial Glargine Intervention) trial allocated 12,537
82 participants with either prediabetes or diabetes to receive either titrated basal insulin glargine
83 targeting a normal fasting plasma glucose ≤ 5.3 mmol/l or standard care; 12 536 of these
84 individuals were also allocated to either 1 g of ethyl esters of n-3 fatty acids or placebo.

85 A subset of 8162 of the participants had serum levels of anti-GAD measured at baseline. Here
86 we report cardiovascular, microvascular and glycaemic outcomes in anti-GAD positive and
87 negative subjects.

88

89 MATERIALS AND METHODS

90 The detailed design of the ORIGIN trial and the main results have been published previously
91 (7-11). Episodes of hypoglycemia confirmed by a self-measured glucose level of 3.0 mmol/l
92 or less were prospectively recorded. All participants gave written informed consent, and a
93 subset also provided consent for the storage and subsequent analyses of blood samples drawn
94 at the time of randomization.

95

96 ORIGIN was designed and conducted by an international steering committee of academic
97 investigators lead by Prof. Hertzal C. Gerstein. It was funded by Sanofi, which also provided
98 regulatory support, site monitoring and insulin glargine (Lantus). Pronova BioPharma Norge
99 AS supplied the n-3 fatty acid supplements (Omacor) and placebo. The study was approved
100 by the ethics committee at each center, and all participants gave written informed consent
101 Eligible participants were randomized to the two interventions using a 2 x 2 factorial design

102 and then seen at the study center after 0.5, 1, 2 and 4 months and thereafter every 4 months
103 until the study ended after a median (interquartile range) follow-up of 6.2 (5.8-6.8) years.

104

105 **Outcomes**

106 The two co-primary outcomes were 1) a composite of cardiovascular death, nonfatal
107 myocardial infarction, or nonfatal stroke and 2) a composite of any of these events, a
108 revascularization procedure, or hospitalization for heart failure. Non-severe hypoglycemic
109 episodes since the previous visit were recorded at each visit and patients with HbA1C levels
110 $\leq 6\%$ (42 mmol/mol) at the end of the study were also considered.

111

112 **Laboratory methods**

113 Anti-GAD was assayed at the Clinical Research Laboratory and Biobank at the Population
114 Health Research Institute in Hamilton, Canada. All assays were done blinded to treatment
115 allocation and other clinical characteristics, using the commercially available Kronus anti-
116 GAD ELISA kit (Star Idaho 83669, USA). Results were reported as international units/ml and
117 were considered negative if the concentration was < 5 IU/ml. This assay had a coefficient of
118 variation of 2.89% at a mean level of 54.2 IU/ml, and 0.56% at a mean level of 2.06 IU/ml. C-
119 peptide was measured in fasting samples using a multiplex assay (Myriad RBM Inc., USA) as
120 previously reported (12).

121

122 **Statistical analyses**

123 All statistical analyses were done using SAS 9.4 for UNIX (SAS Institute Inc., Cary, North
124 Carolina, USA). The effect of each intervention on outcomes was analyzed using Cox
125 regression models stratified according to the factorial allocation, baseline diabetes status and
126 prior cardiovascular event (8). Whether the effect of the intervention differed according to
127 anti-GAD antibody positivity was assessed by including the anti-GAD status in the Cox
128 model as well as an interaction term between the status and treatment allocation.

129

130 The relationship between anti-GAD status and an achieved fasting plasma glucose of ≤ 5.3
131 mmol/l after two years of treatment was analyzed using logistic regression with adjustment
132 for age, sex and the variables with p-values (P) < 0.1 in the univariate analysis. Finally, the
133 effect of antibody positivity on the dose of insulin required to achieve normal glycaemia at 2
134 years in the subgroup of participants who were allocated to insulin glargine was evaluated

135 using the similar approach with the linear regression. The nominal level of significance for all
136 the analyses was p value less than 0.05.

137

138 For participants without diabetes at baseline, the effect of the glargine on the development of
139 new diabetes in anti-GAD positive and negative individuals were assessed using a Cochran–
140 Mantel–Haenszel (CMH) test stratified by factorial allocation and adjusted for a history of a
141 prior cardiovascular event. For consistency, the odds ratios (OR) with 95% CI were calculated
142 based on the CMH test, but the interaction between allocation to glargine and both the n-3
143 fatty acid allocation and the anti-GAD status was assessed using generalized linear models.

144

145 **RESULTS**

146 The mean (SD) age of the 8162 participants included in this study was 63.7 (8.0) years, 33.8%
147 were female, and 81.5% had prior diabetes (Table 1). The mean levels of blood pressure and
148 lipids at baseline did not differ between anti-GAD positive and negative participants (Table
149 1). The use of ACE-inhibitors/angiotensin 2-receptor blockers was higher among anti-GAD
150 positive participants. The participants included in this sub-study of the ORIGIN trial did not
151 differ substantially in baseline characteristics compared to those not included (Supplementary
152 Tables 1 and 2).

153 Compared to 7895 anti-GAD-negative participants, the 267 anti-GAD-positive participants
154 had a higher prevalence of diagnosed diabetes at baseline (86.5% vs 81.3%, $p=0.031$) and
155 more thyroid disease (10.9% vs 7.4%, $p= 0.034$).

156 **Cardiovascular and microvascular outcomes overall and according to glargine and n-3** 157 **fatty acid allocation**

158 The overall incidence of the first co-primary outcome did not differ significantly between
159 anti-GAD positive and negative patients (3.06/100 patient-years vs 2.92/100 patient-years
160 (Table 2.) Neither did the incidence of this outcome differ between anti-GAD positive
161 participants randomized to insulin glargine or to standard glucose lowering treatment, with a
162 HR [95% confidence interval] 0.80 [0.44-1.44] (Table 2), or to n-3 fatty acids or placebo with
163 a HR 0.98 [0.54-1.78] (Supplementary Table 3). Furthermore, the incidence of the second co-
164 primary outcome or all-cause death did not differ between anti-GAD positive and negative
165 individuals, and neither between anti-GAD positive participants randomized to insulin

166 glargine or to standard treatment, or to participants randomized to n-3 fatty acids or placebo
167 (Tables 2 and Supplementary Table 3).

168 The overall incidence of microvascular outcomes was 2.34/100 patient-years in anti-GAD
169 positive participants and 3.93/100 patient-years in anti-GAD negative participants. The HR
170 for the combined microvascular endpoint in anti-GAD positive participants randomized to
171 glargine vs standard treatment was 1.02 [0.50-2.09].

172

173 **Effects on glycaemic control**

174 The incidence of achieving HbA1c \leq 6.0% (42 mmol/mol) at study end did not differ between
175 anti-GAD-positive individuals randomized to insulin glargine or standard care (Table 2).

176

177 The number of non-severe, symptomatic hypoglycaemic episodes was not different between
178 anti-GAD positive or negative participants (7.20 vs 5.99/100 patient-years).

179 Between randomization and approximately one month after all study interventions were
180 stopped at the end of the trial (when an oral glucose tolerance test was administered to people
181 not diagnosed with diabetes by that time), both anti-GAD positive and negative participants
182 who had been allocated to insulin glargine had a lower incidence of diabetes compared to
183 controls (24.5% vs 31.6%, $p=0.014$) with no difference between groups (P for
184 interaction=0.16). This effect was attenuated when tested approximately two months later
185 (Supplementary Table 4, data not shown).

186

187 **DISCUSSION**

188 The distinction between type 1 and type 2 diabetes has usually been based upon age of onset,
189 the severity of beta cell failure and insulin resistance, and the presence of diabetes-associated
190 auto-antibodies. Of interest, in the present study we observed no differences in duration of
191 diabetes, age at diagnosis or ethnic distribution between anti-GAD negative and positive
192 individuals, but more anti-GAD-positive participants had diabetes at inclusion.

193 The major findings in the present study were that the overall incidence of cardiovascular
194 outcomes was similar in anti-GAD positive and negative patients, and that incidence of major
195 cardiovascular events did not differ between anti GAD-positive participants randomized to
196 insulin glargine or standard glucose lowering treatment, or to n-3 fatty acids or placebo.

197 We confirm the results from previously published observational studies that report at least as
198 high rates of cardiovascular endpoints and mortality in anti-GAD-positive individuals as in
199 the typical form of anti-GAD-negative patients with phenotypically type 2 diabetes (2-5).
200 This may be a reminder of the importance of hyperglycemia per se as a risk factor for
201 cardiovascular disease.

202 As previously reported from the full ORIGIN cohort, we found a reduced incidence of new
203 diabetes in the group treated with insulin glargine when OGTT was performed one month
204 after stopping treatment in subjects without diabetes at baseline. The effect was found in both
205 anti-GAD positive and negative individuals. The mean fasting levels of C-peptide at baseline
206 did not differ significantly between the groups, indicating the participants with signs of
207 autoimmune diabetes still had significant endogenous insulin secretion.

208

209 The prevalence of anti-GAD antibodies in our cohort was 3.2% and lower than in many
210 previously reported studies, where numbers usually range from 5-14% (3, 15, 16). This may
211 partly be due to the selection of study participants in ORIGIN. Participants were recruited
212 globally, were 50 years or older with vascular disease, were required to be insulin-naïve and
213 had short duration of diabetes or only prediabetes at baseline. This probably resulted in a
214 selected group of anti-GAD positive participants that may differ from an unselected group in
215 a population-based sample.

216

217 Strengths of the present study include the randomized controlled design testing relevant
218 therapeutic options a relatively long follow-up. Possible weaknesses are the post-hoc nature,
219 the low number of anti-GAD-positive participants and therefore wide confidence intervals to
220 our effect estimates and limited power to detect effects of interventions in anti-GAD positive
221 subjects, and the afore-mentioned possible selection bias. We also chose to measure only anti-
222 GAD among several autoantibodies known to be associated with autoimmune diabetes.
223 Furthermore, we cannot exclude that the findings may be different in subgroups of patients i.e.
224 with high or low levels of C-peptide or low anti-GAD titers. Due to the limited number of
225 anti-GAD positive individuals in our study, this could not be explored further here.

226

227 In conclusion, we report that anti-GAD positive participants included in the ORIGIN study
228 had a similar incidence of cardiovascular outcomes as anti-GAD negative subjects, and that

229 early insulin treatment had a neutral effect compared with standard anti-hyperglycaemic
230 treatment on important outcomes in anti-GAD-positive individuals.

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236 accuracy of the data analysis.

237

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239 monitoring and insulin glargine. Pronova Bio Pharma Norge supplied the n-3 fatty acids
240 supplements and placebo.

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251 **Author Contributions.** K.I.B. and H.C.G. developed the study concept and design,
252 performed the analysis and interpretation of data, drafted the manuscript, performed critical
253 revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content, and performed statistical analysis.
254 V.G., C.W., M.J.M., P.L-J., S.F.L. performed critical revision of the manuscript for important
255 intellectual content.

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307 **Table 1: Baseline Characteristics of Study Participants**

Variable	All Participants (n=8162)	Anti-GAD Positive (n=267)	Anti-GAD Negative (n=7895)	P
Age, years	63.7 (8.0)	64.0 (8.0)	63.7 (8.0)	0.566
Females	2757 [33.8]	99 [37.1]	2658 [33.7]	0.246
Prior Diabetes	6649 [81.5]	231 [86.5]	6418 [81.3]	0.031
Duration of diabetes, years	5.2 (5.8)	5.3 (5.7)	5.2 (5.8)	0.838
New diabetes	533 [6.5]	10 [3.7]	523 [6.6]	0.061
Prior CVD	4840 [59.3]	155 [58.1]	4685 [59.3]	0.671
Thyroid disease	612 [7.5]	29 [10.9]	583 [7.4]	0.034
Ethnic Background				
White	4940 [60.5]	159 [59.6]	4781 [60.6]	0.737
Black	353 [4.3]	11 [4.1]	342 [4.3]	0.866
South Asian	439 [5.4]	11 [4.1]	428 [5.4]	0.353
Other Asian	38 [0.5]	2 [0.7]	36 [0.5]	0.489
Latin	2191 [26.9]	78 [29.2]	2113 [26.8]	0.376
Other	199 [2.4]	6 [2.2]	193 [2.4]	0.837
Prior Gestational Diabetes	103 [3.7]	2 [2.0]	101 [3.8]	0.359
Hypertension	6456 [79.1]	216 [80.9]	6240 [79.0]	0.464
Smoker	1007 [12.3]	26 [9.7]	981 [12.4]	0.189
Alcohol > 2 /week	2014 [24.7]	65 [24.3]	1949 [24.7]	0.898
Education Level				
Education < 8 y	3132 [38.4]	103 [38.6]	3029 [38.4]	0.947
Education 9-12 y	2150 [26.5]	59 [22.1]	2091 [26.5]	0.109
Education > 12 y	2878 [35.1]	105 [39.3]	2773 [35.1]	0.158
BMI (kg/m ²)	30.1(5.3)	29.6(4.9)	30.1(5.3)	0.140
Systolic BP (mmHg)	146.3 (21.8)	146.6 (21.3)	146.3 (21.8)	0.797
Diastolic BP (mmHg)	84.4 (12.1)	84.8 (12.9)	84.4 (12.1)	0.668
Creatinine (µmol/l)	89.3 (22.2)	88.2 (20.8)	89.3 (22.2)	0.394
ACR > 30 mg/g	1550 [19.3]	55 [20.8]	1495 [19.1]	0.511
HDL-cholesterol, mmol/l	1.18 (0.32)	1.18 (0.32)	1.18 (0.32)	0.896
Triglycerides, mmol/l*	1.60 (1.14- 2.20)	1.56 (1.13- 2.10)	1.60 (1.12- 2.20)	0.536
LDL-cholesterol, mmol/l	2.89 (1.02)	2.84 (1.00)	2.90 (1.02)	0.369

Variable	All Participants (n=8162)	Anti-GAD Positive (n=267)	Anti-GAD Negative (n=7895)	P
Total cholesterol, mmol/l	4.87 (1.15)	4.78 (1.12)	4.88 (1.15)	0.186
HbA1c, %	6.50 (0.94)	6.46 (0.93)	6.50 (0.95)	0.538
HbA1c, mmol/mol	47 (10.3)	47 (10.2)	47 (10.4)	0.538
F-Plasma Glucose, mmol/l	7.3 (2.0)	7.3 (1.9)	7.3 (2.0)	0.763
Statin users	4488 [55.0]	140 [52.4]	4348 [55.1]	0.393
ACE/ARB users	5635 [69.0]	199 [74.5]	5436 [68.9]	0.049
Beta Blocker users	4398 [53.9]	143 [53.6]	4255 [53.9]	0.912
Thiazide users	1502 [18.4]	53 [19.9]	1449 [18.4]	0.535
C peptide (nmol/l)**	0.25 (0.86)	0.17 (0.82)	0.25 (0.86)	0.092

308

309 Values are mean (SD) or n [%]. P are comparison between anti-GAD positive and –negative groups. *
310 values are median (25-75%-tile) ** Values were log-transformed before calculating the mean.

311

312 **Table 2: Effect of Glargine versus Standard Care (STD) in anti-GAD Positive and anti-GAD Negative**
 313 **Participants Based on Survival Models**

	Overall	Glargine	STD	HR(95%CI)	P	P*
	N(N/100py)	N(N/100py)	N(N/100py)			
N	8162	4074	4088			.
Person Years	48394	24131	24263			.
First Co-primary	1358 (2.93)	699 (3.06)	659 (2.83)	1.06(0.95-1.18)	0.295	0.200
anti-GAD positive	46 (3.06)	20 (2.53)	26 (3.65)	0.80 (0.44-1.44)	0.454	.
anti-GAD negative	1312 (2.92)	679 (3.04)	633 (2.81)	1.07 (0.96-1.20)	0.204	.
Second Co-primary	2361 (5.56)	1201 (5.68)	1160 (5.43)	1.04(0.96-1.13)	0.360	0.329
anti-GAD positive	75 (5.41)	35 (4.78)	40 (6.10)	0.87 (0.55-1.38)	0.550	.
anti-GAD negative	2286 (5.56)	1166 (5.71)	1120 (5.41)	1.05 (0.96-1.14)	0.281	.
Total Mortality	1295 (2.68)	645 (2.67)	650 (2.68)	0.99 (0.89-1.11)	0.916	0.761
anti-GAD positive	40 (2.52)	21 (2.57)	19 (2.47)	1.17 (0.61-2.22)	0.642	.
anti-GAD negative	1255 (2.68)	624 (2.68)	631 (2.69)	0.99 (0.89-1.11)	0.874	.
Microvascular Outcome	1733 (3.87)	863 (3.89)	870 (3.89)	1.00 (0.91-1.10)	0.955	0.827
anti-GAD positive	35 (2.34)	19 (2.45)	16 (2.21)	1.02 (0.50-2.09)	0.959	.
anti-GAD negative	1698 (3.93)	844 (3.91)	854 (3.94)	1.00 (0.91-1.10)	0.957	.
Non severe hypo	2363 (6.03)	1786 (10.5)	577 (2.61)	3.82 (3.48-4.20)	<0.001	0.307
anti-GAD positive	90 (7.20)	65 (11.5)	25 (3.66)	3.16 (1.97-5.06)	<0.001	.
anti-GAD negative	2273 (5.99)	1721 (10.4)	552 (2.58)	3.85 (3.50-4.24)	<0.001	.
HbA1c<=6% (42 mmol/mol)	2891 (9.30)	1450 (9.37)	1441 (9.22)	1.02 (0.92-1.12)	0.741	0.950
anti-GAD positive	103 (10.5)	53 (10.2)	50 (10.8)	0.95 (0.56-1.60)	0.841	.
anti-GAD negative	2788 (9.26)	1397 (9.34)	1391 (9.17)	1.02 (0.92-1.12)	0.746	.

314 P* is the p-value for the interaction of glargine allocation and anti-GAD-status, py=patient-years.

315 The first co-primary was a composite of cardiovascular death, nonfatal myocardial infarction, or
 316 nonfatal stroke and the second co-primary was a composite of any of these events, a revascularization
 317 procedure, or hospitalization for heart failure.

318