

# Lansoprazole for persistent throat symptoms in secondary care: the TOPPITS RCT

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**Declared competing interests of authors:** none

Published January 2021

DOI: 10.3310/hta25030

## Plain English summary

### **The TOPPITS RCT**

Health Technology Assessment 2021; Vol. 25: No. 3

DOI: 10.3310/hta25030

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# Plain English summary

## Background

One of the commonest reasons for patients attending hospital throat or voice clinics is persistent throat symptoms, which include a feeling of a lump in the throat, a cough or a hoarse voice. Over time, more of these patients are being treated with proton pump inhibitors to suppress stomach acid in the belief that stomach acid entering the throat causes the symptoms, but there is little evidence that these medications work.

## Study aim

The aim of this study is to explore whether or not having a 16-week course of proton pump inhibitors has any impact on throat symptoms. We also tested the usefulness of three different questionnaires in measuring throat symptoms, explored side effects and whether or not patients adhere to treatment, and measured patients' quality of life.

## Methods

Patients with persistent (lasting for more than 6 weeks) throat symptoms who agreed to participate were randomised to receive either the proton pump inhibitor lansoprazole or a placebo. Participants took lansoprazole or placebo for 16 weeks. Symptoms and quality of life were measured before patients were randomised and at 4 and 12 months after randomisation.

## Results

The total number of participants was 346. The mean Reflux Symptom Index outcome score (higher scores meaning worse symptoms) was 22 before the 4-month course of capsules, 16 after 4 months and 15 after 12 months. Participant-reported throat symptoms and quality of life in all participants improved over the 12 months of the study. There was no difference in the symptom improvement experienced by proton pump inhibitor and placebo participants.

## Conclusions

This study shows that proton pump inhibitors do not benefit patients with persistent throat symptoms. Future research should focus on other available therapies.



ISSN 1366-5278 (Print)

ISSN 2046-4924 (Online)

Impact factor: 3.370

*Health Technology Assessment* is indexed in MEDLINE, CINAHL, EMBASE, the Cochrane Library and Clarivate Analytics Science Citation Index.

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## This report

The research reported in this issue of the journal was funded by the HTA programme as project number 12/01/04. The contractual start date was in January 2014. The draft report began editorial review in September 2018 and was accepted for publication in June 2019. The authors have been wholly responsible for all data collection, analysis and interpretation, and for writing up their work. The HTA editors and publisher have tried to ensure the accuracy of the authors' report and would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive comments on the draft document. However, they do not accept liability for damages or losses arising from material published in this report.

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