

REVIEW

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The efficacy of clopidogrel in preventing recurrent cardiovascular events among Arab population carrying different *CYP2C19* mutations: systematic review and meta-analysis

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Abstract

Background: The prevalence and the role of *CYP2C19* gene mutations concerning recurrent Cardiovascular Events (CVEs) among patients treated with clopidogrel is still controversial especially among Arab people. Therefore, this review aimed to determine the frequency of *CYP2C19* polymorphic alleles among the Arab population and to investigate the efficacy of clopidogrel as an antiplatelet drug among those carrying different variants of this gene.

Methodology: Two authors independently searched in PubMed, Google Scholar, and EMBASE databases at any year for studies related to the role of *CYP2C19* gene on the prognosis of patients with CVEs treated with clopidogrel. The review included Arab people who were genotyped to determine the frequency of *CYP2C19* genotypes and alleles (the qualitative part). Concerning the quantitative part (meta-analysis), only patients who previously had CVEs and using clopidogrel as secondary prophylaxis had been included. The Newcastle Ottawa Scale for non-randomized Studies was utilized to consider the risk of bias among included studies. We analyzed the data using odds ratio at 95% confidence interval and the quality of evidence of each outcome measure was judged using GRADE approach.

Results: The current study revealed that 4% of Arabs reported in the included studies are homozygous, and 25% are heterozygous for the *CYP2C19**2 allele. While 3% and 18.5% of them are homozygous and heterozygous of *CYP2C19**17 alleles, respectively. A significant increased risk of recurrent CVEs by about threefold was associated with *CYP2C19**2 or *CYP2C19**3 allele carriers (OR = 3.32, CI = 1.94–5.67, and OR = 3.53, CI = 1.17–10.63, respectively). However, no significant increased risk among carriers of *CYP2C19**17 mutation (OR = 0.80, CI = 0.44–1.44) was documented.

Conclusion: The present study revealed that Arabs carrying *CYP2C19**2 and *CYP2C19**3 alleles could be at increased risk of decreasing the antiplatelet efficacy of clopidogrel and an alternative drug should be prescribed for those patients to avoid recurrent CVEs. However, few available studies were included in the quantitative part of the analysis and further studies with large sample size are recommended to confirm our results.

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Keywords: *CYP2C19* genotypes, Pharmacogenetics, Clopidogrel, Arab population, Platelet reactivity, Cardiovascular events

Background

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a medical term that describes any disorder, which affects the blood vessels, the heart, or both. CVDs, including stroke, coronary artery disorder, and venous thromboembolism, are usually caused by blood coagulation which blocks the vessels from supplying oxygen, glucose, minerals, and micro-minerals to the cardiac or other tissues. Patients with CVD should be subjected to antiplatelet or anticoagulant medications to avoid further blood coagulation [1, 2].

Despite the availability of various clinically effective antiplatelet drugs to prevent blood clots, some patients may have either a hyper-response or resistance to these medications owing to genetic factors. For instance, Higashi et al. reported that warfarin users who are *CYP2C9**2 or *CYP2C9**3 allele carriers could suffer from bleeding due to the poor metabolism of this drug [3]. Also, Wu et al. showed that dabigatran users carrying the *rs2244613* allele of the *CES-1* gene are at high risk of recurrent cardiovascular events (CVEs) because of a lower response to the drug [4].

Clopidogrel is an antiplatelet medication frequently used in Middle-Eastern countries as a protective agent to avoid recurrent CVEs [5]. The effect of several mutations related to the *CYP2C19* gene on the prognosis of patients with CVDs treated with clopidogrel is still controversial. Most studies suggest that some *CYP2C19* variants among specific ethnicities cause weak antiplatelet activity [6].

Pharmacokinetic studies showed that the clopidogrel prodrug is activated by several metabolic enzymes, which is converted to 2-oxo-clopidogrel (inactive metabolite) by *CYP1A2*, *CYP2C19*, and *CYP2B6* oxidative enzymes. Moreover, 2-oxo-clopidogrel is further converted to cis-thiol-clopidogrel (active metabolite) by *CYP3A4*, *CYP2C19*, *CYP2C9*, and *CYP2B6* oxidative enzymes [7, 8]. Therefore, some genetic mutations related to these oxidative enzymes (e.g., *CYP2C19*) could affect the metabolism of clopidogrel and consequently affect its plasma concentration levels and efficacy [9].

At least 30 variants of *CYP2C19* have been identified [10]; however, only three variants have been described as most familiar, including *CYP2C19**2, *CYP2C19**3, and *CYP2C19**17 alleles. *CYP2C19**2 and *CYP2C19**3 mutant alleles encode an inactive *CYP2C19* enzyme, and the *CYP2C19**17 mutant allele is known to express a more active form of *CYP2C19* enzyme [11]. *CYP2C19**1 is described as the wild-type allele and encodes a normal active form of the *CYP2C19* enzyme.

Previous studies revealed that *CYP2C19**2 and *CYP2C19**3 alleles are related to poor clinical outcomes among Asian and European CVD patients treated with clopidogrel [12–14]. Nevertheless, few studies have discussed the efficacy of clopidogrel in preventing recurrent CVEs among Arab (as an ethnic group) carriers of *CYP2C19* mutations. Therefore, this systematic review aimed to investigate the efficacy of clopidogrel as an antiplatelet drug among *CYP2C19* gene mutation carriers. In addition, a qualitative assessment was conducted to determine the frequency of *CYP2C19* polymorphic alleles and genotypes among the Arab population.

Methods

Search methods

Two authors (N.R. and A.K.) independently searched PubMed, Google Scholar, and EMBASE databases for studies published in any year in the English language and related to clopidogrel efficacy in Arabic CVD patients carrying *CYP2C19**2, *CYP2C19**3, and *CYP2C19**17 alleles. Studies related to *CYP2C19* gene polymorphisms frequency among Arabs were reviewed. Manuscripts that included non-Arab populations, non-clopidogrel users, or patients with any contraindication for clopidogrel (i.e., intracranial hemorrhage) were excluded. The following terms were used for the search; *CYP2C19* genotypes; OR *CYP2C19* polymorphic alleles; OR *CYP2C19* gene mutations; AND clopidogrel response; OR antiplatelet activity; AND Arabs.

Type of participants

The qualitative section of this systematic review included Arab people genotyped to determine the frequency of *CYP2C19* genotypes and alleles. For the quantitative section (meta-analysis), only patients with previous CVEs on clopidogrel as secondary prophylaxis were included. These patients were categorized into carriers of (cases) and non-carriers (controls) of *CYP2C19* mutations, including *CYP2C19**2, *CYP2C19**3, and *CYP2C19**17. Cardiovascular patients on other drugs rather than clopidogrel were excluded from the study.

Outcome measures

The outcome of the quantitative part of the study was to predict the antiplatelet efficacy of clopidogrel among *CYP2C19* mutation carriers and non-carriers who previously had CVEs by measuring the frequency of the recurrent CVDs or high platelet aggregation reported.

On the other hand, the qualitative part aimed to determine the frequency of genotypes and alleles related to the *CYP2C19* gene among Arabs.

Data collection and extraction

Two authors (N.R. and A.K.) independently reviewed the abstracts of potential articles to determine the inclusion criteria and identify all the relevant articles. In addition, they extracted the specific characteristics from the included studies, including study setting, duration, design, participants' age, sex, and outcome measures. Disagreement or variation in judgment was resolved by discussion; thus, it is not likely that this method could introduce bias in this systematic review.

Assessment of the risk of bias

Two authors (N.R., N.M.) independently judged the risk of bias in the included studies. They graded each risk as high, low, or unclear according to The Newcastle Ottawa Scale for non-randomized Studies [15].

Assessment of the quality of evidence

According to the GRADE (Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development, and Evaluation) approach, the quality of evidence for each outcome measure was judged as high, moderate, low, or very low [16].

Measures of treatment effect

A random-effect model of the Review Manager 5.3 program [17] was used for data analysis. The prevalence of different studied alleles was determined. To assess the role of *CYP2C19**2, *3, and *17 alleles on recurrent CVEs, Odds Ratio (OR) with 95% Confidence Interval (CI) was conducted between carriers (cases) and non-carriers (controls) of these different *CYP2C19* variants with the level of significant was considered at < 0.05 .

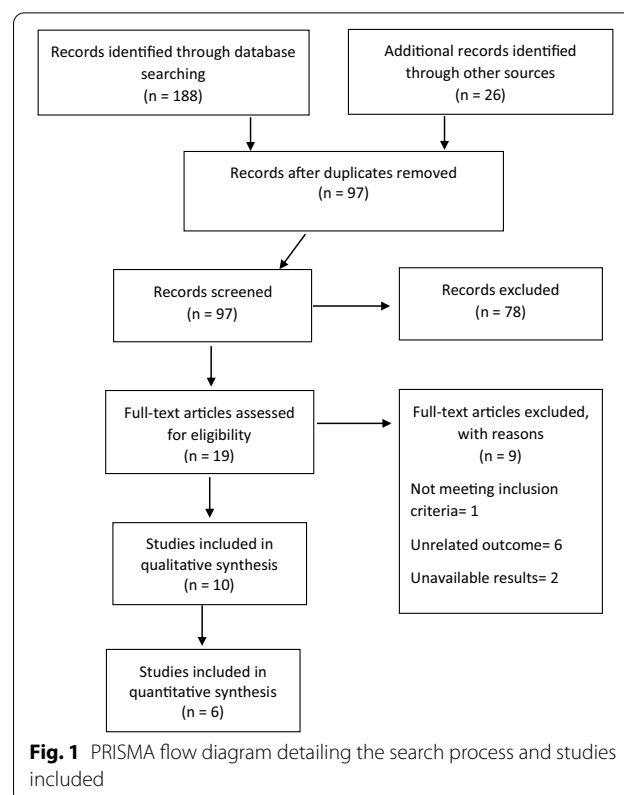
Dealing with heterogeneity

The I^2 statistic was used to assess heterogeneity among the included studies in each analysis [18].

Results

Results of search

The search included one hundred and eighty-eight potentially relevant articles, of which 97 were identified after the removal of duplicates. Nineteen full-text articles were assessed for eligibility; ten met the inclusion criteria (10 in the qualitative and 6 in the quantitative analysis). Details of the search are given in the PRISMA flow diagram (see Fig. 1).



Included studies

In the quantitative part of the study, the review included 6 observational studies (2 retrospectives, 3 prospective, and one cross-section) [13, 19–23], which reported data on clopidogrel antiplatelet efficacy in the presence of different *CYP2C19* gene variations.

On the other hand, the qualitative part included 10 studies, four case series, and 6 observational studies. These ten studies reported the frequency of *CYP2C19* polymorphisms among Arabs [24–27].

Two authors independently (N.R. and A.K.) extracted characteristics of the included studies, including study title, journal, study design, duration, setting, aim, participants' age, sex, number, and outcome measures (see Table 1).

Trial participants

The quantitative part of the review included 878 Araba (Saudis, Egyptians, Jordanians, Tunisians, Iraqis, and Palestinians) patients who were previously diagnosed with CVDs. For the qualitative part, 1417 Arabs, either healthy or non-healthy, were included. The participants in the qualitative were from 7 different Arabic

Table 1 Characteristics of the included studies

Author	Title	Setting/duration	Design	Participants	Aim	Outcome
1- Adel Alhazzani et al. [13]	Pharmacogenetics of <i>CYP2C19</i> genetic polymorphism on clopidogrel response in patients with ischemic stroke from Saudi Arabia	Neurology Clinics at Aseer Central Hospital, Abha, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, between October 2015 and January 2016	Retrospective study	50 patients on 75 mg maintenance dose of clopidogrel therapy suffering from stroke	To assess the influence of <i>CYP2C19</i> genetic polymorphisms on the response to clopidogrel in ischemic stroke in Saudi Arabian population	The variant allele (homozygous and homozygous Mutant) showed significant influence on platelet inhibition and the antiplatelet effect of clopidogrel in ischemic stroke
2- Khalil et al. [22]	Genetic and Nongenetic Factors Affecting Clopidogrel Response in the Egyptian Population	Hospital network in Chicago, Illinois between 5 March and 6 April 2020	Retrospective study	190 patients with acute coronary syndrome (ACS) treated with clopidogrel (75 mg/day) for at least a month	To investigate genetic and non-genetic factors associated with clopidogrel response in Egyptians	<i>CYP2C19</i> loss-of-function (LOF) alleles carriers had increased risk of recurrent CVES vs. noncarriers (odds ratio 2.52; 95% confidence interval 1.23–5.15, $P = 0.011$)
3- Abid et al. [19]	Impact of cytochrome P450 2C19*2 polymorphism on the clinical cardiovascular events after stent implantation in patients receiving clopidogrel of a southern Tunisian region	Department of Cardiology of Sfax (Tunisia) May 2009 and September 2010	Prospective study	100 consecutive patients admitted to the cardiology department for percutaneous coronary stenting, 2 groups: those with at least one <i>CYP2C19</i> *2 allele (*2 carriers) and non-carriers	to investigate the genetic variant of the gene <i>CYP2C19</i> in our population To assess the involvement of this genetic profile in the occurrence of major cardiovascular events	The prevalence of <i>CYP2C19</i> *2 allele was 11.5%. No statistically significant differences were noted between the two groups regarding the occurrence of intra hospital recurrent CVES
4- Mohammad et al. [23]	<i>CYP2C19</i> genotype is an independent predictor of Adverse Cardiovascular Outcome in Iraqi Patients on Clopidogrel Post Percutaneous Coronary Intervention	Duhok Heart center, Kurdistan-Iraq, in the period between Jan 2014 to Mar 2017	Prospective study	201 unselected patients undergoing percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) aged 35–82 (M:F = 1.9:1) 186 patients had regular follow up	To determine the impact of <i>CYP2C19</i> genotyping on the occurrence of major adverse cardiovascular events (recurrent CVES)	The risk of recurrent CVES is 8.6% after a median follow-up of 12 months,
5- Ayesha et al. [21]	The clinical effects of <i>CYP2C19</i> *2 allele frequency on Palestinian patients receiving clopidogrel after percutaneous coronary intervention	The cardiology department of the European Gaza Hospital (EGH), March and the end of May 2014	Prospective study	110 consecutive unrelated post-PCI patients	To determine the prevalence of <i>CYP2C19</i> *2 and *3 alleles in Palestinian patients with percutaneous coronary intervention	The frequency of <i>CYP2C19</i> *1, *2 and *3 alleles was 82.3%, 15.5% and 2.3%, respectively
6- Al-Azzam et al. [20]	Factors that contribute to clopidogrel resistance in cardiovascular disease patients: environmental and genetic approach	King Abdullah University Hospital (KAUH) and Jordan University Hospital (JUH) in the period between November 2010 and June 2011	Cross-section study	270 cardiovascular disease patients	To investigate factors that contribute to clopidogrel resistance	Gender, concomitant use of calcium channel blockers, HDL and <i>CYP2C19</i> *2 polymorphism are significant factors
7- Ahmad et al. [26]	Analysis of Gene Polymorphism <i>CYP2C19</i> in the Lebanese Population Who Reside in Colombia	three Lebanese volunteers residents of Colombia	Cross-section study	109, 38 women and 71 men between 18 and 75 years	To determine the polymorphism of the <i>CYP2C19</i> gene in the Lebanese	Similar behavior with the alleles frequencies of the previous studies made in Colombia, Africa, Europe and other American population

Table 1 (continued)

Author	Title	Setting/duration	Design	Participants	Aim	Outcome
8- Rjoub et al. [25]	Allelic frequency of <i>PON1</i> <i>Q192R</i> , <i>CYP2C19*2</i> and <i>CYP2C19*17</i> among Jordanian patients taking clopidogrel	among Jordanian patients in University of Jordan	Cross-section study	148 unrelated Jordanian patients who were taking clopidogrel (55 females and 95 males)	To investigate the influence of allelic frequencies of <i>PON1</i> <i>Q192R</i> , <i>CYP2C19*2</i> and <i>CYP2C19*17</i> genetic polymorphisms on the response to clopidogrel	The <i>CYP2C19*2</i> , <i>CYP2C19*17</i> , and <i>PON1</i> <i>Q192R</i> allele frequencies were 9.8, 28.72 and 28.7%, respectively
9- Khalaf et al. [27]	Impact of <i>Cytochrome P450 2C19*2</i> and <i>*3</i> on Clopidogrel Loading Dose in Saudi Patients with Acute Coronary Syndrome	Prince Sultan Cardiac Center, Buraidah, Saudi Arabia	Prospective study	90 patients underwent coronary angioplasty with drug eluting stents	To evaluate the impact of <i>CYP2C19</i> allele <i>*2</i> and allele <i>*3</i> on PRU and the potential clinical consequences of such interaction	Genotypes <i>*1/*1</i> , <i>*2/*2</i> , and <i>*1/*2</i> were expressed by 60, 28, and two patients (67, 32, and 3%), respectively
10- Al-Jenoobi et al. [24]	<i>CYP2C19</i> Genetic Polymorphism in Saudi Arabians	King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia Different geographic regions	Cross-section study	192 healthy unrelated Saudi Arabians	To evaluate <i>CYP2C19</i> genetic polymorphism in a Saudi Arabian population by determining frequencies of <i>CYP2C19*2</i> , <i>*3</i> , <i>*4</i> , <i>*6</i> , <i>*7</i> and <i>*17</i> alleles	The allelic frequency of heterozygous <i>CYP2C19*2</i> was 8.2% with only one individual carry the homozygous genotype of this defective allele

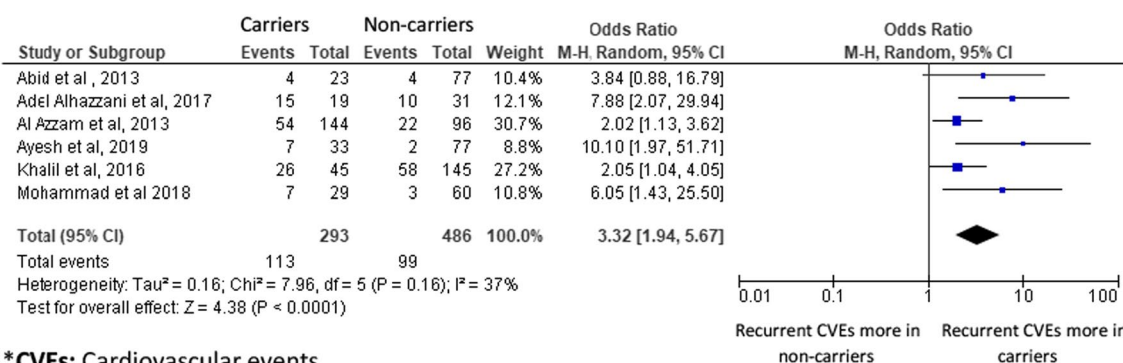


Fig. 2 Forest plot showing the frequency of recurrent CVEs among carriers and non-carriers of *CYP2C19*2* mutation, and results of odds ratios

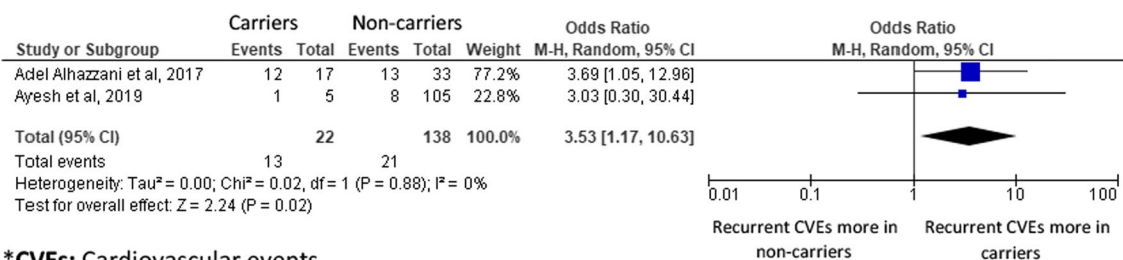


Fig. 3 Forest plot showing the frequency of recurrent CVEs among carriers and non-carriers of *CYP2C19*3* mutation

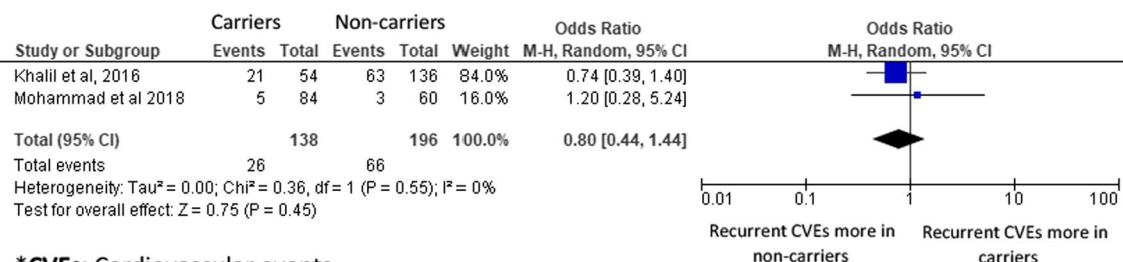


Fig. 4 Forest plot showing the frequency of recurrent CVEs among carriers and non-carriers of *CYP2C19*17* mutation, and results of odds ratios

countries, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, Iraq, and Palestine.

Risk of bias among included studies

Overall, no high risk of bias was recorded among the included studies in this review. Regarding {adequate case definition} bias and {comparability of cases and control} bias, it was unclear in Rjoub et al. study. In addition, the {same representative rate for cases and control} bias was low risk in all included studies. While {consecutive representative of cases} bias and

{independent outcome assessment} bias were unclear in most of the included studies (Additional file 1: Fig. S1).

Outcomes

Outcomes of the quantitative part

Figures 2, 3, and 4 present the forest plots of the frequency of recurrent CVD events among Arab patients who are clopidogrel users and are either carriers or non-carriers of *CYP2C19*2*, *CYP2C19*3*, and *CYP2C19*17* mutations. The results showed a significantly increased risk of recurrent CVDs events by about threefold

associated with *CYP2C19**2 and *CYP2C19**3 mutations compared to non-carriers (OR=3.32, CI=1.94–5.67, and OR=3.53, CI=1.17–10.63, respectively). However, no significant difference was recorded between both studied groups regarding the presence of *CYP2C19**17 mutation (OR=0.80, (CI=0.44–1.44).

Outcomes of the qualitative part

This part included 1417 Arab people, which were genotyped in order to determine the *CYP2C19* gene variations and to detect the availability of any well-known mutated alleles, including *CYP2C19**2, *CYP2C19**3, and *CYP2C19**17 alleles among Arab populations, including Saudis, Egyptians, Jordanians, Iraqis, Palestinians, Lebanese, and Tunisians people. The results revealed that 59 (4.16%) of these carried two *CYP2C19**2 alleles (homozygous), and 356 (25.12%) had one *CYP2C19**2 allele and one *CYP2C19**1 allele (heterozygous). Moreover, 42 (2.96%) carried two *CYP2C19**17 alleles (homozygous), and 262 (18.49%) carried one *CYP2C19**17 allele, and one wild-type allele of *CYP2C19* gene (heterozygous).

The most common *CYP2C19* genotype reported among Arabs was the wild type *1/*1, of which 49.26% of them had the homozygous form of the *CYP2C19**1 allele. The frequency of the *CYP2C19**1 allele was 71.07%, followed by the *CYP2C19**2 allele (16.73%) and *CYP2C19**17 (12.21%), respectively. The *CYP2C19**3 allele was rarely detected among Arabs (<1%) compared to *CYP2C19**1, *2, and *17 alleles.

Based on the frequencies of genotypes, about half of the Arab people (>49%) could be described as *CYP2C19* extensive metabolizers. Other common *CYP2C19* gene phenotypes identified among Arabs were intermediate metabolizers (25%), rapid metabolizers (18%), poor metabolizers (4%), and ultra-rapid metabolizers (3%), respectively.

Discussion

Many studies genotyped the *CYP2C19* gene to assess clopidogrel's efficacy among specific ethnic groups. However, few studies correlated *CYP2C19* gene mutation and clopidogrel efficacy among Arab ethnic groups.

In the quantitative part, the present study recorded significant differences between carriers (cases) and non-carriers (controls) of *CYP2C19**2 and *CYP2C19**3 alleles regarding the number of recurrent CVEs among Arabs using clopidogrel (OR=3.32, CI=1.94, 5.67, and OR=3.53, CI=1.17, 10.63, respectively). However, there was no significant difference among carriers and non-carriers of the *CYP2C19**17 allele concerning the same aspect (OR=0.80, CI=0.44, 1.44).

The included studies regarding the recurrent CVEs among carriers and non-carriers of *CYP2C19**2 and

*CYP2C19**17 alleles showed low or insignificant heterogeneity. Therefore, we judged the quality of evidence of these outcomes to be high. This strong evidence indicates high confidence that the evidence reflects the actual effect. Meanwhile, we judged the quality of evidence of the pooled estimate of the included studies related to the recurrent CVEs among carriers and non-carriers of *CYP2C19**3 to be moderate. We downgrade the evidence by one level due to imprecision, as indicated by a wide confidence interval due to the small sample size. Moderate evidence indicates moderate confidence that the evidence reflects the actual effect, and further research is likely to change the results.

These results indicate that carrying *CYP2C19**2 and *CYP2C19**3 alleles may decrease the antiplatelet activity of clopidogrel among Arab patients and could lead to recurrent CVEs. The present outcomes were consistent with more than 18 high-quality clinical trials and 6 meta-analysis studies. These revealed that *CYP2C19**2 and *3 alleles have a significant role in causing recurrent CVEs among patients using clopidogrel [28–47].

On the other hand, 3 previous meta-analysis concluded that loss-of-function alleles (*CYP2C19**2 and *CYP2C19**3) have no significant effect in causing recurrent CVEs while using clopidogrel. However, they showed a significant effect in leading to other complications (e.g., ST-elevation and stent thrombosis) [48–50]. This could be explained by the presence of other genetic factors that may affect both the clopidogrel bioactivation process and recurrent CVEs, including specific *CYP2C9*, *CYP3A4*, *CYP1A2*, and *CYP2B6* genes' mutations.

Regarding the qualitative part, the study revealed that *CYP2C19* alleles including *1 (71%), *2 (17%), *17 (12%), and *3 (<1%), respectively, are commonly distributed among Arabs. Compared with some other ethnic groups (Caucasians, Africans, and Asians), the frequency of *CYP2C19**1 allele among Arabs was more or less similar to Caucasians (59%), Africans (70%), and Asians (65%). Besides, the frequency of the *CYP2C19**2 allele is similar to that of Caucasians (15%) and Africans (13%) but less than Asians (35%). Concerning the frequency of the *CYP2C19**17 allele among some different ethnic groups, it could be described that Caucasians were the most ethnic group to carry this allele (26%), followed by the Africans (17%), Arabs (12%), and Asians (0.5%). While the *CYP2C19**3 allele was rare among all reported ethnic groups, this allele is commonly detected in Asians (9%) [23].

Conclusion and future perspective

This study revealed that the *CYP2C19* genotypes including *1/*1, *1/*2, *1/*17, *2/*2, and *17/*17 are commonly distributed among Arabs. In addition, most Arab patients carrying *CYP2C19**2 or *CYP2C19**3 mutated alleles are at a significantly higher risk of recurrent CVEs, and could be described as non-responders to clopidogrel. However, few available studies were included in the quantitative part of the analysis, and further studies with a large sample size are recommended to confirm our results.

Abbreviations

CES-1: Carboxylesterase 1; CVD: Cardiovascular disease; CVDs: Cardiovascular diseases; CVE: Cardiovascular event; CVEs: Cardiovascular events; CI: Confidence interval; CYP2C9: Cytochrome P450 2C9 family 2 subfamily C member 9; CYP2B6: Cytochrome P450 family 2 subfamily B member 6; CYP2C19: Cytochrome P450 family 2 subfamily C member 19; CYP3A4: Cytochrome P450 family 3 subfamily A member 4; GRADE: Grading of recommendations assessment, development, and evaluation; OR: Odds ratio; PRISMA: Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses.

Supplementary Information

The online version contains supplementary material available at <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43042-022-00313-w>.

Additional file1. Figure S1: Risk of bias among included studies regarding adequate case definition, consecutive representativeness of cases, selection of community controls, adequate control definition, ascertainment of exposure/independent blind assessment of outcome, comparability of cases and controls, ascertainment of cases and controls/adequacy of the follow-up period, and complete follow-up period/same response rate.

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Author contributions

AK and NR contributed in conceptualization. AK, NR and NM contributed in writing—original draft preparation. NM, AF, and KA contributed in writing—review and editing. NR, NM, AK, and AF contributed in resources. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Availability of data and materials

The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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