

Diagnosis and management of acute lower gastrointestinal bleeding

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Purpose of review

We review and summarize the most recent literature, including evidence-based guidelines, on the evaluation and management of acute lower gastrointestinal bleeding (LGIB).

Recent findings

LGIB primarily presents in the elderly, often on the background of comorbidities, and constitutes a significant healthcare and economic burden worldwide. Therefore, acute LGIB requires rapid evaluation, informed decision-making, and evidence-based management decisions. LGIB management involves withholding and possibly reversing precipitating medications and concurrently addressing risk factors, with definitive diagnosis and therapy for the source of bleeding usually performed by endoscopic or radiological means. Recent advancements in LGIB diagnosis and management, including risk stratification tools and novel endoscopic therapeutic techniques have improved LGIB management and patient outcomes. In recent years, the various society guidelines on acute lower gastrointestinal bleeding have been revised and updated accordingly.

Summary

By integrating the most recently published high-quality clinical studies and society guidelines, we provide clinicians with an up-to-date and comprehensive overview on acute LGIB diagnosis and management.

Keywords

colonoscopy, computed tomography angiography, endoscopic hemostasis, esophagogastroduodenoscopy, hematochezia, lower gastrointestinal bleeding, lower gastrointestinal hemorrhage, trans-arterial embolization

INTRODUCTION

Lower gastrointestinal bleeding (LGIB) is defined as bleeding originating from a colonic or rectal source distal to the ileocecal valve [1^{••},2–4]. As reported by the United States (US) Centers for Disease Control, LGIB is among the most common gastroenterological causes for emergency department visits and hospital admissions, constituting approximately 30% of all GIB referrals, thereby rendering it a significant healthcare and economic burden [5[•]]. In contrast to acute upper gastrointestinal bleeding (UGIB), high-level evidence from randomized controlled trials for providing guidance in diagnosing and managing acute LGIB are more limited. Thus, current guidelines for managing LGIB often rely on data derived from uncontrolled observational studies and/or expert opinion. In this review, we summarize the literature regarding the diagnosis and management of acute LGIB, emphasizing the most recently published evidence-based guidelines and data published in the previous 18 months.

PATIENT PRESENTATION

The most common clinical presentation of acute LGIB is hematochezia (fresh blood/maroon colored stools passed per rectum) [4] and/or rarely melena (black tarry stools) $[1^{\bullet\bullet},2,3]$. LGIB presents most commonly in the elderly on a background of significant comorbid illnesses, and often in patients being treated with antiplatelet or anticoagulant medications [4,6,7].

Colonic diverticular bleeding is consistently reported as being the most common cause of acute

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Curr Opin Gastroenterol 2024, 40:34-42 DOI:10.1097/MOG.000000000000984

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KEY POINTS

- Acute LGIB requires prompt patient evaluation including risk stratification.
- In patients presenting with acute hematochezia and who are hemodynamically stable, colonoscopy should be the first diagnostic test of choice and may be performed sometime during the hospital stay.
- In patients presenting with acute hematochezia and hemodynamically unresponsive to fluid resuscitation or who are unable to receive preparation for colonoscopy, initial evaluation with CT angiography (CTA) is recommended.
- Endoscopic hemostasis treatment options include dilute epinephrine injection in combination with another hemostasis modality, mechanical therapy using throughthe-scope (TTS) clips, cap-mounted clips or band ligation, contact thermal devices (bipolar or heater probe or coagulation forceps), noncontact thermal devices such as argon plasma coagulation (APC), and topical hemostatic agents.
- Radiological intervention for acute LGIB using transarterial catheter embolization (TAE) is indicated for patients not amenable or refractory to endoscopic hemostasis therapy.
- Surgical therapy has a very limited role in acute LGIB and is rarely indicated.

LGIB [1^{••},2,3,8–10]. A recent multicenter, retrospective cohort identified diverticular bleeding as the definitive or presumptive source of hematochezia in nearly 64% of cases [4]. Other, less commonly identified causes of acute LGIB include ischemic colitis, delayed postprocedural bleeding (e.g. post polypectomy, endoscopic mucosal resection, or endoscopic submucosal dissection), inflammatory bowel disease, colorectal polyps and malignant neoplasms, rectal ulcer, hemorrhoids, drug-induced colopathy/ ulcer, vascular malformations, and infectious/ radiation colitis [2–4,9]. Table 1.

Reported risk factors for acute LGIB are gastrointestinal inflammatory conditions (e.g. ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease), tumors or polyps, advanced age, major comorbidities including hypertension, diabetes mellitus, history of cerebrovascular and/or cardiovascular disease, renal or hepatic impairment, alcohol abuse, and use of antiplatelet agents and anticoagulants [4,6,11–13]. An increased LGIB risk has also been described in professional athletes, particularly endurance athletes, with proposed mechanisms including splanchnic hypoperfusion, frequent use of NSAIDs and mechanical trauma during intensive physical exertion [14].
 Table 1. Potential causes of acute lower gastrointestinal

 bleeding

Benign	Hemorrhoids Anal fissure Solitary rectal ulcer Rectal prolapse Radiation proctopathy
	Angioectasias Dieulafoy's lesion Colonic or rectal varices
	Inflammatory bowel disease (ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease) Ischemic colitis Infectious colitis
	Polyps (e.g. adenomas, hamartomas, juvenile type)
	Postendoscopic intervention (polypectomy, EMR, ESD) Postsurgical anastomotic ulcer
Malignant	Colorectal cancer Anal cancer Metastatic disease

EMR, endoscopic mucosal resection; ESD, endoscopic submucosal dissection.

Despite their well known anti-inflammatory, analgesic and antipyretic effects, excessive NSAID use increases the risk of not only gastrointestinal bleeding, mainly upper, but also LGIB [15].

Reported in-hospital mortality rates for acute LGIB vary between 1 and 4%, with markedly higher mortality rates for 'in hospital bleeding' in patients admitted to hospital because of other medical causes with acute LGIB developing during hospitalization [4,6,7,16].

Initial assessment of patients with presumed acute lower gastrointestinal bleeding

Initial assessment of a patient presenting with signs/symptoms of acute LGIB (e.g. hematochezia) includes the measurement of vital signs to evaluate the patient's hemodynamic status and for risk stratification. A shock index greater than 1 (pulse divided by SBP at the time of patient presentation) can be used to define the patient as hemodynamically unstable [8].

It is important to obtain a history of the current gastrointestinal bleeding episode that includes time of onset, character of the bleeding (e.g. hematochezia, melena), any associated abdominal pain, and any previous similar bleeding events. In addition, it is important to attain the patient's past medical history, including identifying any comorbid medical conditions, prior intra-abdominal surgeries (e.g. vascular surgery/stenting), use of current medications, especially antithrombotic agents [9,15]. A focused physical examination should include cardiopulmonary examination and abdominal palpation in search of any focal tenderness, guarding, rebound, and/or mass. In addition, digital rectal examination should be performed, assessing for the presence of any anorectal lesions and for the presence of fresh blood or melena $[1^{--},3,9]$.

Initial laboratory evaluation should include complete blood count (CBC), serum electrolytes, including creatinine and blood urea nitrogen, albumin, international normalized ratio (INR), and blood type and cross match [3].

For hemodynamically unstable patients, immediate fluid resuscitation initially with crystalloids and possibly vasopressors is required until hemodynamic stability is achieved [1^{••},3] (Fig. 1).

Risk stratification

Several preendoscopy risk stratification scores exist for acute LGIB. These scores may either aim to identify patients at high risk for clinical deterioration, re-bleeding and/or mortality, require inpatient evaluation, or aim to identify low-risk patients suitable for discharge from the emergency department with further evaluation in the outpatient setting. According to recent guidelines, risk scores are recommended to be used as adjunctive tools and should not replace clinical judgement [1^{••},3,8]. The Oakland Score, derived and validated by Oakland *et al.* [17] in 2017, is a risk stratification score designed to identify 'lower risk' LGIB patients. The score integrates age, gender, history of LGIB, rectal examination findings, pulse, blood pressure, and hemoglobin levels to produce an overall risk score. An Oakland score 8 or less has been shown to be well tolerated for discharging 'low risk' patients with acute LGIB directly from the emergency department [16,17].

Another risk stratification score is the ABC score, designed for identification of patients with acute UGIB or LGIB at high risk for 30-day mortality (ABC score \geq 8). The ABC score integrates age, laboratory parameters (urea, albumin, creatinine), comorbidities (altered mental status, cirrhosis, disseminated malignancy) and American Society of Anesthesiology (ASA) score at presentation [18].

Additional LGIB risk stratification scores developed in recent years include the Sengupta score for predicting 30-day mortality [19], NOBLADS score (NSAID use, No diarrhea, No abdominal tenderness, Blood pressure <100 mmHg, antiplatelet use, albumin <3.0 g/dl, Charlson co-morbidity index \geq 2, and Syncope) [20] for prediction of severe bleeding, and the Strate score for identifying patients with acute severe LGIB [21].

Compared with other existing tools for LGIB risk-stratification, the Oakland score has been



FIGURE 1. Management of acute lower gastrointestinal bleeding. CBC, complete blood count; CT, computed tomography; CTA, computed tomographic angiography; CV, cardiovascular; EBL, endoscopic band ligation; Hb/Hgb, hemoglobin; i.v., intravenous; LGIB, lower gastrointestinal bleeding; PEG, polyethylene glycol; TTS, through-the-scope; UGI, upper gastrointestinal.

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shown to be the best predictor for severe bleeding [22], and in a recent meta-analysis comparing four validated LGIB risk-stratification scores, the Oakland score was reported to be the best predictor for safe patient discharge, major bleeding, and need for blood transfusion [23^{••}].

Recent guidelines on acute LGIB from the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) [1^{••}], the European Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ESGE) [3], and the British Society of Gastroenterology (BSG) [8], recommend the Oakland score for risk stratifying patients presenting with acute LGIB.

Red blood cell transfusion strategy

Consensus exists amongst the latest ACG, ESGE, and BSG society guidelines regarding indications for RBC transfusion in acute LGIB, with a recommended restrictive transfusion strategy, and a threshold hemoglobin level of 7 g/dl for initiating RBC transfusion. In cases of active ischemia (especially acute coronary syndrome) or a history of cardiovascular disease, a more liberal blood transfusion hemoglobin threshold of 8-9 g/dl is recommended [1^{••}, 3, 8, 24].

Furthermore, in a recent Cochrane systematic review examining various clinical conditions including GIB, a restrictive blood transfusion strategy with threshold hemoglobin level of 7–8 g/dl was shown to reduce RBC transfusion exposure by 41%, with no adverse impact on mortality, cardiovascular events, infections or thromboembolism [25].

Role of platelet transfusion

Routine platelet transfusion during LGIB is thought to be of no benefit and is not recommended for GIB patients without thrombocytopenia [26]. Current recommendation in the setting of significant LGIB is platelet transfusion to maintain a platelet count greater than $30\,000/\mu$ l, or > $50\,000/\mu$ l if an invasive procedure is planned [1^{••}].

Antifibrinolytic agents

Accumulating high-quality evidence of recent years suggests no advantage in using antifibrinolytic agents such as tranexamic acid for GIB. This includes a recent international multicenter randomized, placebo-controlled trial (HALT-IT), in which no difference in mortality or arterial thromboembolic events was demonstrated for patients with acute UGIB or LGIB receiving tranexamic acid infusion. Moreover, there was a significantly higher rate of venous thromboembolic events demonstrated in the tranexamic acid group [27]. Therefore, antifibrinolytic agents such as tranexamic acid are not recommended as part of the treatment regimen in GIB [1^{••},3,8].

Role of endoscopy

Patients presenting with hematochezia and hemodynamic instability, may have massive upper GIB as their source of bleeding [6,28]. Thus, current guidelines recommend for such patients to initially perform CT angiography (CTA). If CTA fails to demonstrate a lower gastrointestinal source of hemorrhage, esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGD) should then be performed [1^{••},3,8], as it may identify the source of bleeding in up to 15% of cases of severe hematochezia [1^{••},4]. EGD may be performed with administration of intravenous erythromycin (250 mg intravenous 30-90 min before upper endoscopy) for improved endoscopic visualization [29].

In patients presenting with acute hematochezia and who are hemodynamically stable or are hemodynamically responsive to intravenous fluid resuscitation, colonoscopy should be the first diagnostic test of choice. Colonoscopy should preferentially be performed sometime during the hospital stay [1^{••},3,8]. Traditionally, colonoscopy for acute LGIB was recommended to be performed within 24 h of patient presentation [2,30]. Several recent retrospective studies have failed to show any significant differences in mortality, rebleeding and re-hospitalization for early (<24 h) colonoscopy compared with delayed colonoscopy [31, 32-34]. Furthermore, systematic reviews of RCTs have shown that colonoscopy performed within that early timeframe has not been shown to improve clinically relevant outcomes when compared with delayed (>24 h)colonoscopy [35,36]. Therefore, urgent colonoscopy within 24h of patient presentation is no longer recommended and current guidelines recommend that the timing of colonoscopy be decided on a caseby-case basis [1^{••},3,8].

Colonoscopy preparation is recommended using a poly-ethylene glycol (PEG)- based solution, and a recent RCT reported no significant difference in bowel preparation quality between high volume (41) and low volume (21) PEG-based solution in the setting of acute LGIB [37]. The diagnostic yield of colonoscopy in acute LGIB is variable ranging between 70 and 95%, mainly for identification of diverticulosis and 'suspected' diverticular hemorrhage [4,7,8].

Endoscopic hemostasis treatment options

Endoscopic hemostasis treatment options include dilute epinephrine injection in combination with another hemostasis modality, mechanical therapy using through-the-scope (TTS), cap-mounted clips or band ligation, contact thermal devices (bipolar probe or hemostatic forceps), noncontact thermal devices such as argon plasma coagulation (APC), and topical hemostatic agents [1^{••},3].

For colonic diverticular bleeding with high-risk stigmata of recent hemorrhage (e.g. active bleeding, nonbleeding visible vessel, adherent clot), mechanical therapy using TTS endoscopic clips is the recommended endoscopic therapy [1^{••},3,8]. A recent multicenter retrospective study reported that direct clipping of the active bleeding site or the nonbleeding visible vessel, is superior to indirect clipping (i.e. zipper-like closure of the diverticulum) in preventing early (<30 day) and late (<1 year) re-bleeding, as well as in reducing RBC transfusion, with no significant difference in primary hemostasis [38]. Moreover, using this same dataset (CODE BLUE-J), Kobayashi et al. have recently reported that compared with endoscopic clipping (both TTS and overthe-scope clipping), endoscopic band ligation (EBL) as the primary treatment for diverticular bleeding was associated with significantly lower rates of early and late rebleeding, reduced need for interventional radiology and reduced length of hospital stay. Thus, EBL may be a promising technique for the treatment of acute diverticular hemorrhage, yet additional high level is needed [39].

The most common serious adverse event following polyp resection is postpolypectomy bleeding, occurring between 0.4 and 12.7% [40–43]. For prevention of postpolypectomy bleeding, current evidence suggests a significant benefit of prophylactic clipping following resection of large, right-sided, nonpedunculated polyps (≥ 2 cm) in patients receiving anticoagulation [40,44[•],45–50]. For EMR of large polyps (≥ 2 cm), a novel through-the-scope mucosal defect closure system was recently developed and in a multicenter prospective study was shown to have efficacy in closure of large post-EMR defects. The reported delayed postpolypectomy bleeding rate was 3.2% [51[•]].

For large pedunculated polyps (≥ 1 cm), current data indicate that prophylactic clipping of the polyp stalk prior to hot snare resection is efficacious in preventing both immediate and delayed postpolypectomy bleeding and is thus recommended [52,53,54[•]].

In case of immediate intraprocedural bleeding during polypectomy, ESGE guidelines recommend treatment with contact thermal coagulation (snaretip soft coagulation or coagulation forceps), or TTS clipping, with or without dilute epinephrine injection [55[•]].

For suspected delayed postpolypectomy bleeding, a conservative 'watchful waiting' approach may be initially attempted. If, however, bleeding is thought to be profuse and ongoing, repeat colonoscopy is indicated, and the recommended first-line endoscopic interventions includes clips (either through-the-scope or cap-mounted) or contact/ noncontact thermal coagulation therapy, with or without dilute epinephrine injection. Topical hemostatic powders are recommended as secondline therapy if mechanical or thermal therapies fail $[1^{--},3,55^{-}]$.

APC is a relatively well tolerated, noncontact thermal hemostasis method used for tissue coagulation by discharging ionized argon gas (plasma) [56]. In the setting of acute LGIB, APC is recommended primarily for the treatment of superficial vascular lesions such as colorectal angioectasias [1^{••}]. In addition, APC has recently been shown to be effective in the treatment of bleeding secondary to portal hypertensive colopathy in cirrhotic patients [57].

Hemostatic powders are synthetic or biologically derived polymers that upon contact with moisture rapidly absorb water to form adhesive barriers and also locally promote coagulation cascade activation and platelet aggregation, thereby occluding the bleeding source [58[•]]. These modalities have gained attention during recent years as simple, safe, and effective tools for primary, secondary, and bridging (e.g. before angiographic embolization) endoscopic treatment for a variety of GIB causes [58",59,60,61"]. Topical hemostasis agents may be particularly effective for large and/or irregular bleeding surface areas such as colorectal tumors that are not amenable to other endoscopic hemostasis methods [59,60,61"]. Topical hemostasis therapy may act as a bridge to definitive surgical resection of the tumor. A recent systematic review of randomized controlled trials showed no difference in primary hemostasis and a higher initial success rate for Hemospray compared with standard endoscopic therapy [62]. Hemostatic powders are currently recommended as second line or 'salvage' endoscopic therapy in acute LGIB [1^{••},3,58[•]].

The role of cross-sectional imaging

Owing to its high sensitivity and specificity in detecting bleeding extravasation rates as low as 0.3 ml/min, CT angiography is recommended as the initial diagnostic test for hemodynamically unstable LGIB patients presenting with acute hematochezia [1^{••}, 3, 8],

Role of interventional radiology and surgery

Radiological intervention for acute LGIB using trans-arterial catheter embolization (TAE) of the

involved vessel is indicated for patients with either a positive CT angiography, persistent LGIB nonresponsive to pharmacologic and endoscopic measures, or a significant LGIB with inability to achieve adequate bowel cleansing [1^{••},3,8].

In a recent systematic review, Corrado *et al.* described empiric or blind TAE (i.e. for patients without extravasation on angiography but with indirect signs of bleeding such as aneurysm/pseudoaneurysm, vessel cut-off, or vascular irregularity/ abnormality) performed for both LGIB and UGIB, a mean technical success rate of 97.7% (range 62–100%), a mean clinical success rate of 80% (range 51–100%), and a pooled adverse event incidence of nearly 10% [63]. Thus, empiric TAE may be considered as an alternative for surgery in such patients.

Surgical therapy has a very limited role in LGIB and is rarely indicated. Surgery may be indicated for LGIB not amenable or refractory to other interventional measures, including endoscopic and embolization therapy [1^{••},3,8]. Moreover, in a recent nation-wide study in the United States involving over 364 000 LGIB cases, surgery carried a significant morbidity and in-hospital mortality risk [64].

Antiplatelets and anticoagulants

Management of antiplatelet medications during acute lower gastrointestinal bleeding

Antiplatelet medications used in clinical practice include aspirin and P2Y12 receptor inhibitors (e.g. Clopidogrel, Prasugrel, and Ticagrelor), all of which except Ticagrelor irreversibly inhibit platelet function for approximately 7–10 days [65^{••}].

Current LGIB guidelines recommend that aspirin given for primary cardiovascular prophylaxis (i.e. in patients with cardiovascular risk factors but without a previous cardiovascular event) should be withheld at the time of presentation [1^{••},3,8], Moreover, in patients who do not meet appropriate indications for ongoing cardiovascular primary prophylaxis, permanent cessation of aspirin should be considered [3,8,66].

For patients with acute LGIB on aspirin monotherapy for secondary cardiovascular prophylaxis (i.e. patients who underwent a previous vascular event with or without intervention, following which aspirin therapy is prescribed indefinitely), guidelines recommend that aspirin should be continued without interruption, and if withheld at the time of patient presentation, aspirin should be re-started as soon as hemostasis is achieved (within 3–5 days) [1^{••},3,8,66,67]. This owing to increased mortality and thrombotic events in GIB patients in whom aspirin was stopped and not restarted [68-70].

For patients presenting with acute LGIB on dual antiplatelet therapy (DAPT), management decisions should be taken embracing a multidisciplinary approach, and in consultation with cardiologists/ neurologists. It is recommended to continue DAPT whenever possible if coronary stent(s) has been placed in the past 12 months because of the high risk of in-stent thrombosis. Alternatively, the P2Y12 receptor inhibitor should be temporarily withheld with aspirin continued. The P2Y12 inhibitor should then be re-started within 5 days [1^{••},3,8,66,67].

These recommendations regarding resumption of antiplatelet therapy are further supported by the findings of a recent randomized trial showing a significantly lower incidence of cerebrovascular and cardiovascular events for GIB patients under aspirin monotherapy with early (<3 days) resumption of aspirin, and lower mortality for GIB patients under DAPT therapy in whom aspirin was continued and Clopidogrel was withheld and re-started within 7 days [71].

Management of oral anticoagulants during acute lower gastrointestinal bleeding

Oral anticoagulants (OAC) include direct oral anticoagulants (DOACs) and Vitamin K antagonists (VKAs) such as Warfarin.

DOACs include the direct thrombin inhibitor Dabigatran and the direct factor Xa inhibitors Rivaroxaban, Apixaban, and Edoxaban, all having a relatively short onset of action, reaching maximal effect within 3 h from administration, and short half-lives, with dissipation of their anticoagulant effect within less than 24 h [72]. Warfarin's onset of action and half-life are more prolonged, each taking several days, thereby delaying restoration of its anticoagulant effect following withdrawal [72].

Since their introduction, DOACs have been well studied and recent data suggest a favorable safety profile when compared with traditional VKA anticoagulants [73–75]. Compared with VKAs, DOACs generally are associated with lower mortality and lower rates of major bleeding and intracranial hemorrhage risk, with equivocal data in the literature regarding GIB risk under DOACs [11,72,74,76–79].

Management of oral anticoagulants during self-limited lower gastrointestinal bleeding

In patients who present with self-limited LGIB under oral anticoagulant therapy not requiring hospitalization (e.g. Oakland score ≤ 8) nor any invasive intervention, oral anticoagulants may be continued

without interruption, whereas in cases of a more significant LGIB, OAC should be withheld $[1^{\bullet\bullet},3]$.

Major lower gastrointestinal bleeding during vitamin K antagonist treatment

For major LGIB with hemodynamic instability under VKA treatment, particularly if INR is above the therapeutic range, reversal of VKA is recommended preferentially using a four-factor prothrombin complex concentrate (PCC) rather than FFP [1••,3,65••,67]. This is because of the better efficacy of PCC and its more rapid reversal of VKA action [1••,3,8,66,67]. Additionally, intravenous vitamin K administration is recommended by European and British guidelines [3,8,66].

Major lower gastrointestinal bleeding during direct oral anticoagulant treatment

For major LGIB while under DOAC therapy, withholding anticoagulation is the mainstay of treatment, with expected normalization of anticoagulant activity within 24 h [1^{••},3,8,11]. Reversal agents specific for each DOAC are also available, namely Idarucizumab for Dabigatran and Andexanet alpha for Rivaroxaban, Apixaban, and Edoxaban [80].

According to recent guidelines, the use of DOAC reversal agents is recommended only in situations of life-threatening LGIB with persisting hemodynamic instability, and preferentially if the last DOAC dose was administered in the previous 24 h [1^{••},3,8].

The joint American-Canadian guideline proposes to avoid using DOAC reversal agents because of a concern regarding their efficacy in hemostasis and in mortality prevention, as well as a potential prothrombotic effect [67].

Resumption of oral anticoagulants following lower gastrointestinal bleeding

For LGIB patients in whom oral anticoagulants are interrupted, treatment should be resumed after bleeding cessation and within 7 days or less from presentation for either VKAs or DOACs [1^{••},3,8,66, 67], with consideration for earlier (\leq 72 h) anticoagulant resumption by bridging with unfractionated heparin (UFH) or low-molecular-weight heparin (LMWH) in patients estimated to be at high thrombotic risk [3,8,66].

Those considered to be at high thrombotic risk include those with a mechanical heart valve, a CHA2DS2-VASc score at least 4, patients with a recent (<3 months) cerebrovascular event or venous thromboembolism (VTE), with a history of recurrent/unprovoked VTE, VTE with active cancer, or those with prior thromboembolism with anticoagulant interruption [81].

When considering anticoagulation resumption in patients with both a high bleeding risk and a high thrombotic risk, alternatives to anticoagulants including left atrial appendage closure for atrial fibrillation or inferior vena cava filter for VTE should be considered, using a multidisciplinary approach in consultation with cardiologists and/or neurologists [66,81].

CONCLUSION

In this review article, we highlighted and summarized the most recent literature on LGIB, with an emphasis on clinical studies published in the past 18 months. This includes the latest American and European society guidelines and advancements in therapeutic options, thereby providing clinicians an up-to-date and comprehensive tool for LGIB diagnosis and management.

Acknowledgements

Guarantors of the article: I.M.G., Y.E. Author contributions: Y.E. – writing the review; I.M.G. – critical review and editing of the review, finalizing of the review.

Financial support and sponsorship

None.

Conflicts of interest

Y.E., none. I.M.G. is a consultant to Boston Scientific, Medtronic, Motus GI, and has received research funding from AstraZeneca and CheckCap.

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