

STARTVerso3: A RANDOMIZED, DOUBLE-BLIND, PLACEBO-CONTROLLED PHASE III TRIAL OF FALDAPREVIR IN COMBINATION WITH PEGYLATED INTERFERON α -2a AND RIBAVIRIN IN TREATMENT-EXPERIENCED PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC HCV GENOTYPE-1 INFECTION

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BACKGROUND

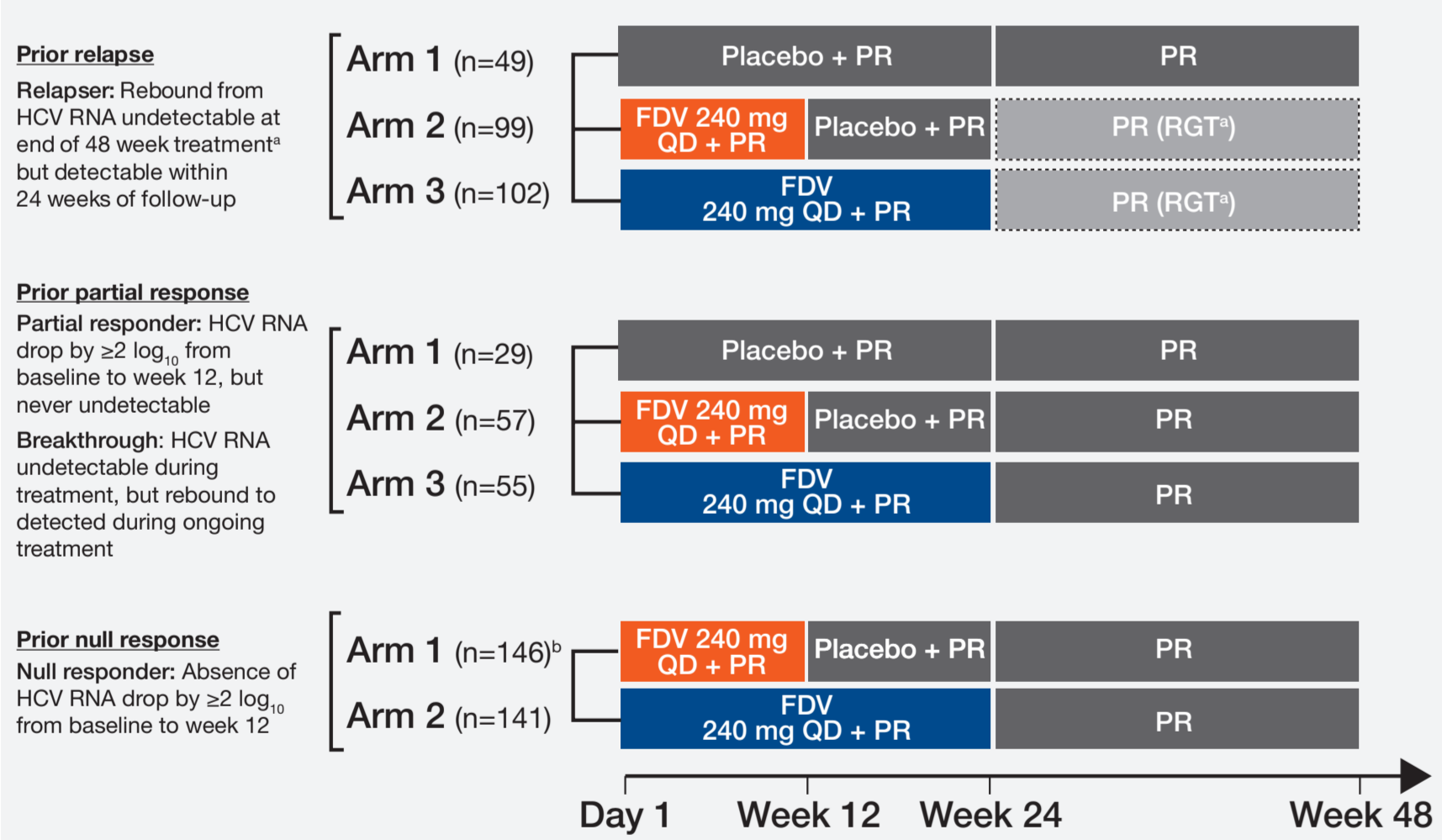
- Faldaprevir (FDV) is a potent inhibitor of HCV NS3/4A with in vitro antiviral activity against HCV genotypes (GT) 1, 4, 5, and 6.¹
- FDV pharmacokinetics support oral, once-daily (QD) administration.²
- A Phase III study of treatment-naïve patients infected with HCV GT-1 (STARTVerso1) treated with FDV plus pegylated interferon α -2a and ribavirin (PR):
 - Reported sustained virologic response 12 weeks after completion of treatment (SVR12) in 79% (FDV 120 mg QD) and 80% (FDV 240 mg QD) of patients.³
- Here, we report the results of STARTVerso3 (NCT01358864), a Phase III trial assessing the efficacy and safety of FDV (240 mg QD) plus PR in treatment-experienced patients with chronic HCV GT-1 infection.

METHODS

STUDY DESIGN

- Multicenter, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled Phase III trial (N=678).
- Adult patients infected with chronic HCV GT-1 who had failed prior PR treatment, categorized as:
 - Relapse:** HCV RNA <25 IU/mL target not detected (TND) at the end of a complete 48 weeks prior treatment, but detectable within 24 weeks of follow-up
 - Partial response:** $\geq 2 \log_{10}$ decrease in HCV RNA from baseline at week 12 but not achieving HCV RNA <25 IU/mL TND by end of treatment
 - Null response:** Absence of HCV RNA drop by $\geq 2 \log_{10}$ from baseline at week 12.
- Patients were randomized based on prior treatment response (Figure 1).
 - Prior relapsers and partial responders randomized 1:2:2 to receive 48 weeks of PR plus:
 - Placebo for 24 weeks, or
 - FDV 240 mg QD for 12 weeks then placebo for 12 weeks, or
 - FDV 240 mg QD for 24 weeks.
 - Prior null responders randomized 1:1 to receive 48 weeks of PR plus:
 - FDV 240 mg QD for 12 weeks then placebo for 12 weeks, or
 - FDV 240 mg QD for 24 weeks.
- Patients with prior relapse who achieved early treatment success (ETS, HCV RNA <25 IU/mL detected or TND at week 4, and undetected at week 8) were eligible to stop treatment at week 24.
- Randomizations were stratified by HCV GT-1 subtype (1a, 1b, and other).
- Primary endpoint: Sustained virologic response at 12 weeks after completion of treatment (SVR12; HCV RNA <25 IU/mL TND).
- Secondary endpoints: SVR24, ETS, alanine transaminase/aspartate aminotransferase (ALT/AST) normalization, and adverse events (AEs).

FIGURE 1. STARTVerso3 study design



ANALYSES

- Primary efficacy analyses based on intent-to-treat (ITT) population.
- Proportions of prior relapsers and partial responders achieving SVR12 analyzed using the Cochran-Mantel-Haenszel test.
 - Stratified by GT-1 subtype and prior treatment response.
- For prior null responders, a 95% confidence interval for SVR12 for each arm was calculated.
 - The lower limit was compared with 0.2.*
- Safety analysis included all patients receiving ≥ 1 dose of study medication, regardless of randomization.
- All other efficacy and safety data were summarized descriptively.

*As recommended by EMA draft guideline⁴, a lower limit of the SVR12 rate 95% CI <20% was considered indicative of FDV having increased activity over PR alone in null responders. This corresponded to a null hypothesis that the incidence of SVR12 in the active-treated group=0.2, while the alternative hypothesis was that the incidence=0.2.

RESULTS

PATIENTS

- Of 678 randomized patients, 677 received at least 1 dose of study medication.
- Baseline demographics and disease characteristics were similar among treatment arms and cohorts (Table 1).

PRIOR RELAPSE COHORT

FIGURE 2. SVR12 rates (ITT population)

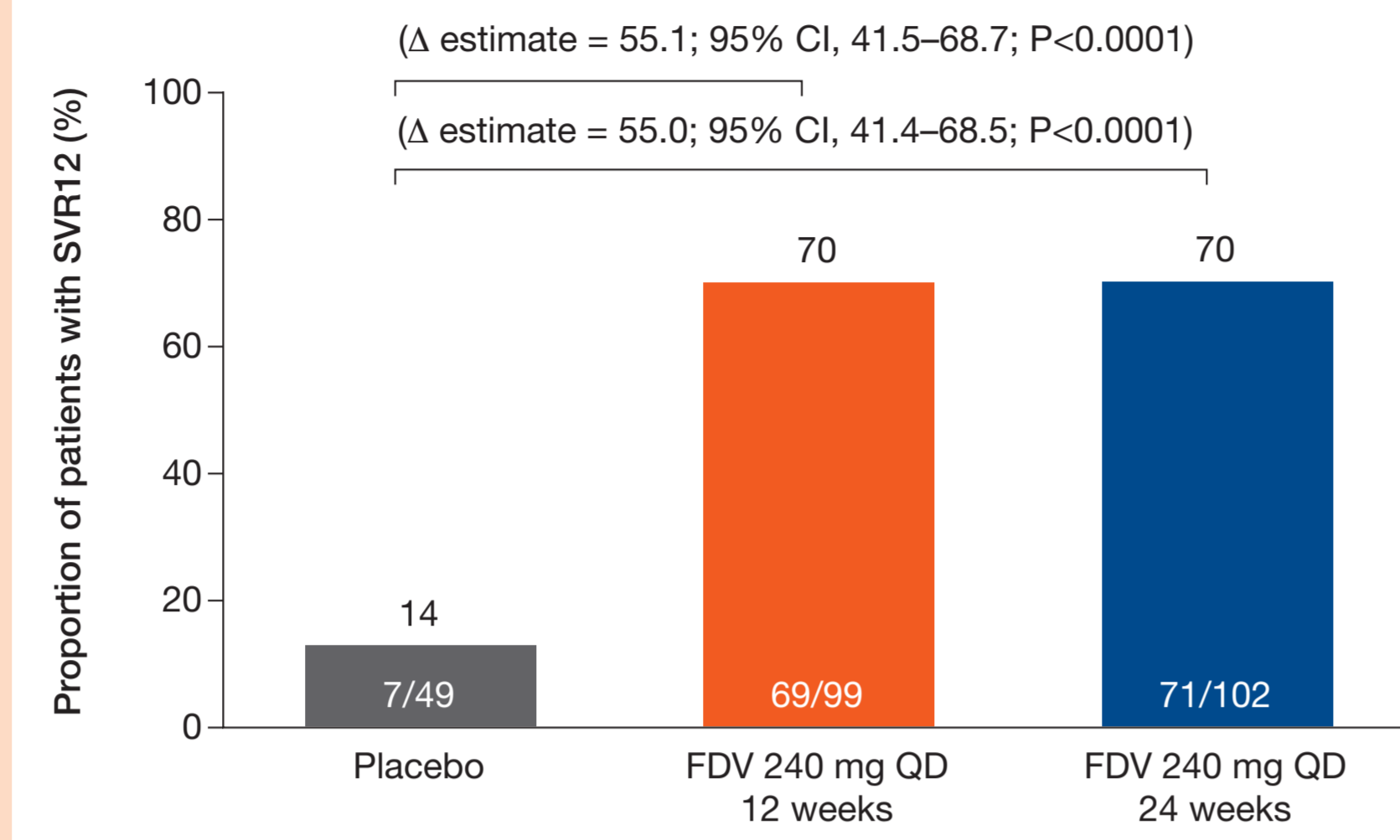


TABLE 2. SVR12 in patient subgroups

SVR12	Placebo + PR (N=49)	12 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=99)	24 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=102)
HCV GT-1 subtype, n/N (%)			
GT-1a	3/24 (13)	28/46 (61)	29/46 (63)
GT-1b	4/25 (16)	41/53 (77)	42/56 (75)
IL28B, n/N (%)			
CC	1/12 (8)	28/32 (88)	24/28 (86)
CT	5/34 (15)	35/56 (63)	39/63 (62)
TT	1/2 (50)	6/11 (55)	7/10 (70)
Cirrhosis, n/N (%)			
Yes	1/6 (17)	9/13 (69)	6/11 (55)
No	5/42 (12)	59/85 (69)	65/91 (71)

FIGURE 3. Virologic failure for GT-1a and GT-1b patients

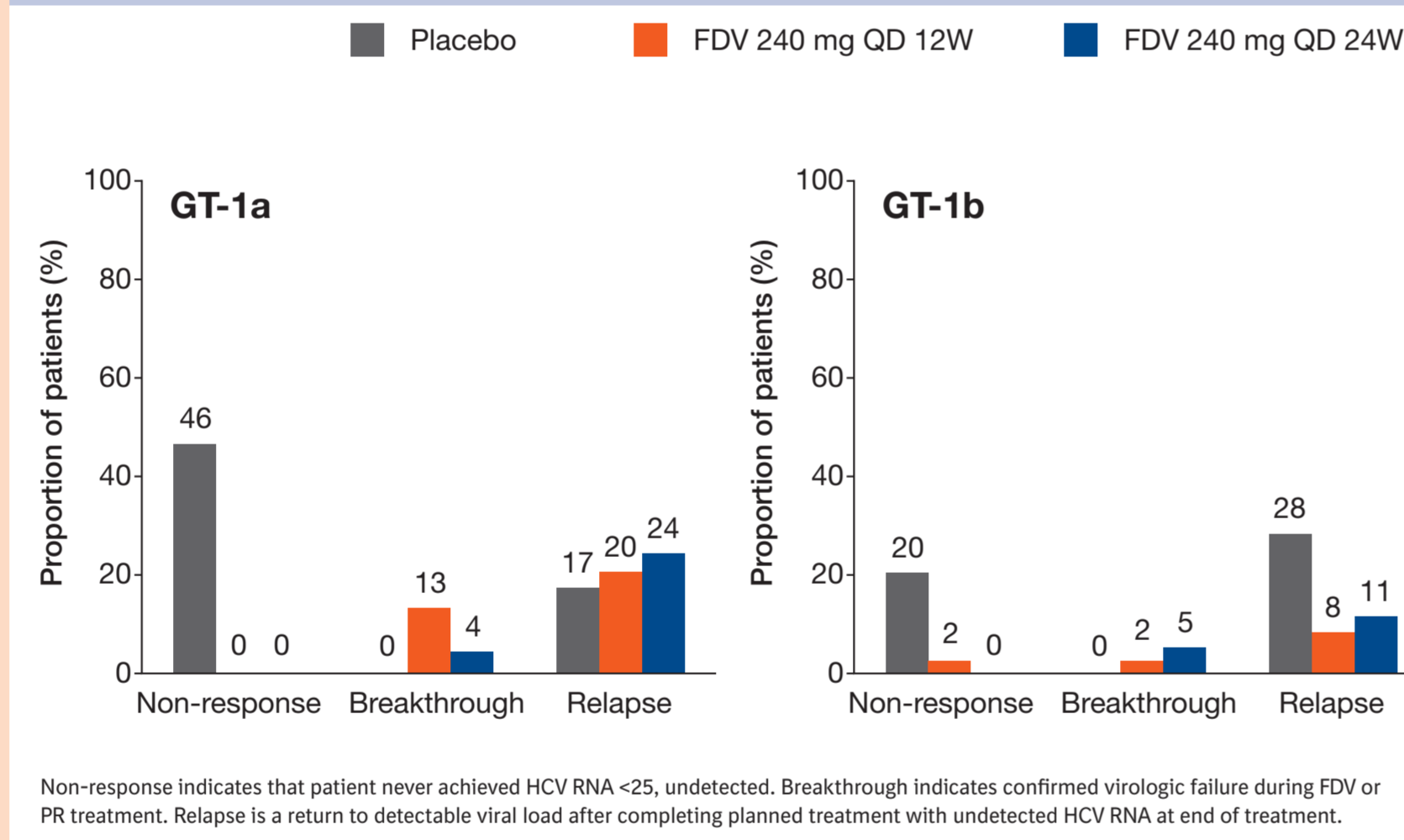


TABLE 1. Baseline demographics

	Prior relapse			Prior partial response			Prior null response		
	Placebo + PR (N=49)	12 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=99)	24 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=102)	Placebo + PR (N=29)	12 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=57)	24 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=55)	Placebo + PR (N=14)	12 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=14)	24 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=14)
Male, n (%)	29 (59)	55 (56)	60 (59)	19 (66)	37 (65)	34 (62)	9 (63)	9 (63)	78 (55)
Race, n (%)									
White	6 (12)	17 (17)	20 (20)	6 (21)	10 (18)	7 (13)	29 (20)	29 (21)	29 (21)
Black	0 (0)	4 (4)	3 (3)	1 (3)	3 (5)	1 (2)	4 (3)	4 (3)	8 (6)
Hispanic	42 (86)	78 (79)	78 (77)	22 (76)	44 (77)	46 (84)	109 (75)	104 (74)	104 (74)
Mean age, years (SD)	53 (8)	54 (9)	54 (8)	56 (8)	53 (8)	52 (10)	53 (9)	54 (8)	54 (8)
Mean BMI, kg/m ² (SD)	27 (4)	26 (4)	26 (4)	27 (4)	26 (4)	27 (4)	26 (5)	27 (5)	27 (5)
HCV GT-1 subtype, n (%)									
1a	24 (49)	46 (47)	46 (45)	14 (48)	25 (44)	26 (47)	66 (46)	69 (49)	69 (49)
1b	25 (51)	53 (54)	56 (55)	15 (52)	32 (56)	29 (53)	78 (54)	72 (51)	72 (51)
IL28B (rs12979860), n (%)									
CC	12 (25)	32 (32)	28 (28)	5 (17)	5 (9)	9 (16)	8 (6)	8 (6)	10 (7)
CT	34 (69)	56 (57)	53 (52)	19 (66)	45 (79)	34 (62)	100 (69)	93 (70)	93 (70)
TT	2 (4)	11 (11)	10 (10)	5 (17)	7 (12)	12 (22)	35 (24)	32 (23)	32 (23)
Fibrosis stage ^a , n (%)									
F0-F2	37 (76)	73 (74)	64 (63)	16 (55)	40 (70)	31 (56)	74 (51)	67 (48)	67 (48)
F3-F4	11 (22)	25 (25)	38 (37)	11 (38)	17 (30)	24 (44)	71 (49)	74 (53)	74 (53)
Cirrhosis present ^b , n (%)	6 (12)	13 (13)	11 (11)	7 (24)	10 (18)	16 (29)	40 (28)	40 (28)	40 (28)

EFFICACY

- Prior relapsers:** 55% estimated difference in SVR12 rate between FDV + PR (both arms) and PR + placebo-treated patients (P<0.0001, Figure 2).
- Prior partial responders:** 54% and 44% estimated difference in SVR12 rate between FDV + PR and PR + placebo-treated patients (P<0.0001) in the 12- and 24-week arms, respectively (Figure 4).
- Prior null responders:** 33% SVR12 rate in both FDV + PR arms (12-week arm, P<0.0001 and 24-week arm, P=0.0002 vs historic control rate [20%]³) (Figure 6).
- Low PR + placebo SVR12 rates in the difficult-to-treat prior relapse and partial response cohorts (14% and 3%, respectively; Figures 2 and 4).
- Among FDV-treated patients in the prior relapse cohort, 86%–87% achieved ETS (Figure 8a) and were therefore eligible to stop treatment at week 24.
 - Of those, 75% of patients in both the 12-week and 24-week arms achieved SVR12 (Figure 8b).

PRIOR PARTIAL RESPONSE COHORT

FIGURE 4. SVR12 rates (ITT population)

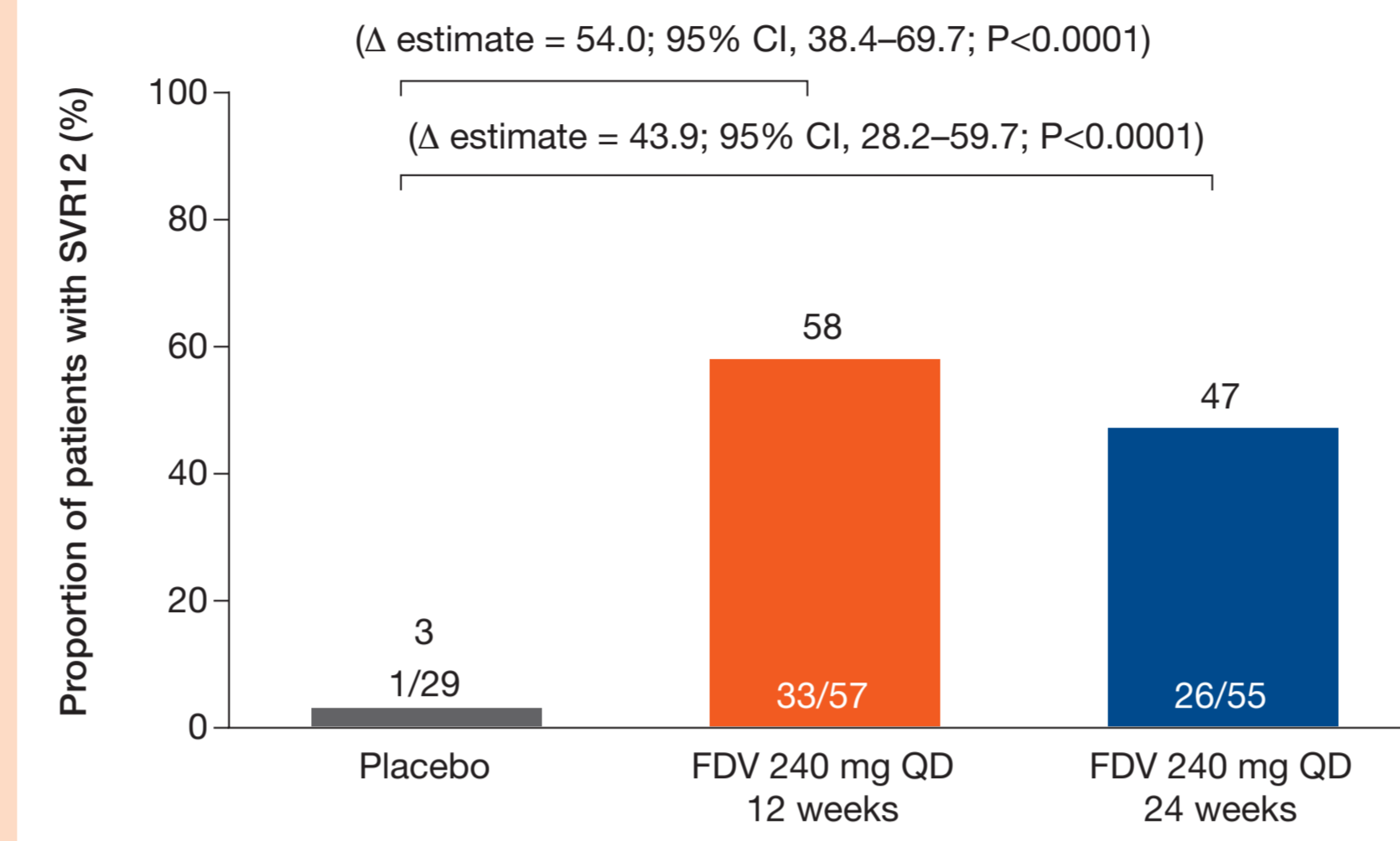


TABLE 3. SVR12 in patient subgroups

SVR12	Placebo + PR (N=29)	12 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=57)	24 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=55)
HCV GT-1 subtype, n/N (%)			
GT-1a	0/14 (0)	13/25 (52)	15/26 (58)
GT-1b	1/15 (7)	20/32 (63)	11/29 (38)
IL28B, n/N (%)			
CC	0/5 (0)	5/5 (100)	5/9 (56)
CT	1/19 (5)	25/45 (56)	15/34 (44)
TT	0/5 (0)	3/7 (43)	6/12 (50)
Cirrhosis, n/N (%)			
Yes	0/7 (0)	4/10 (40)	3/16 (19)
No	1/20 (5)	29/47 (62)	23/39 (59)

FIGURE 5. Virologic failure for GT-1a and GT-1b patients

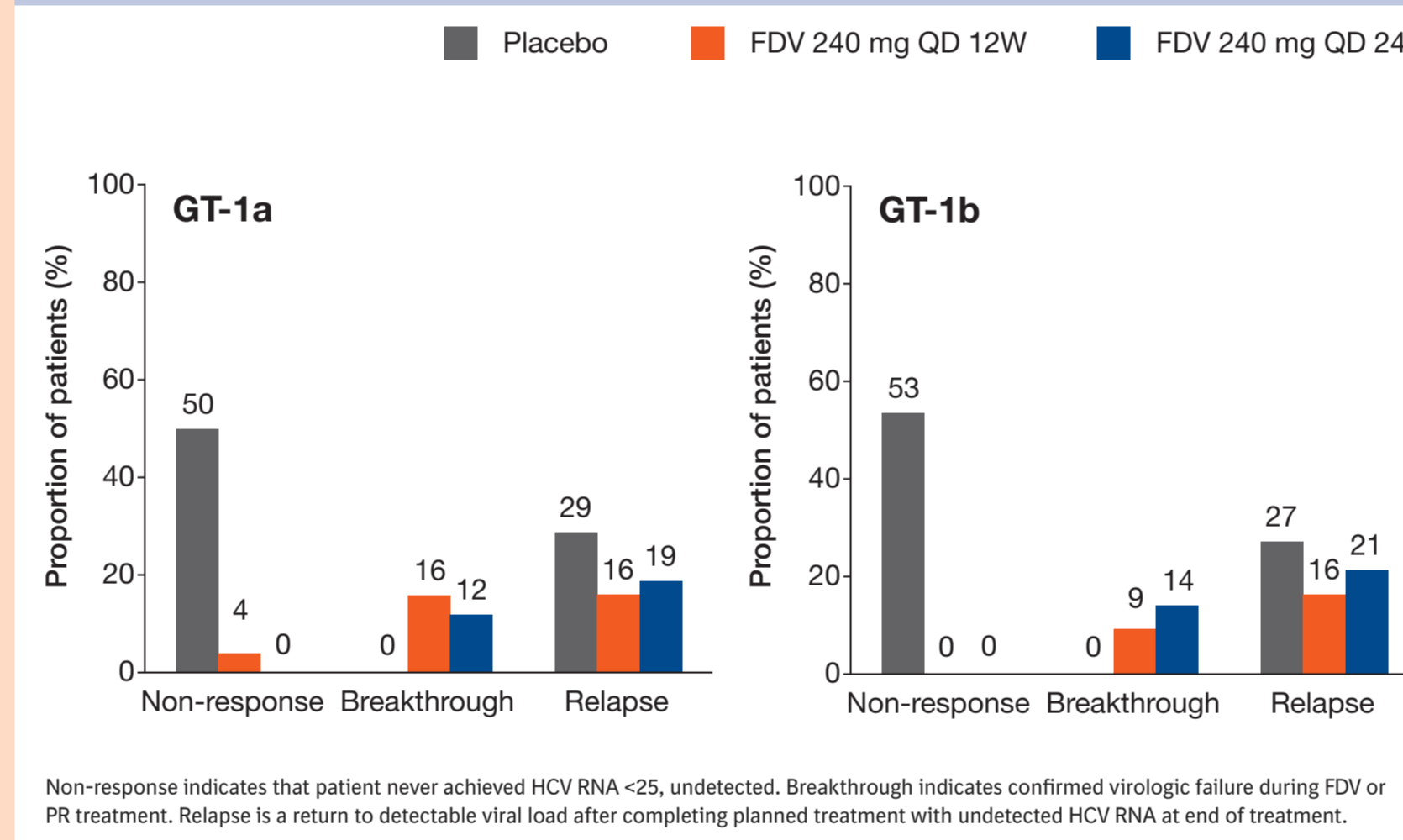


FIGURE 8a. ETS in prior relapse cohort

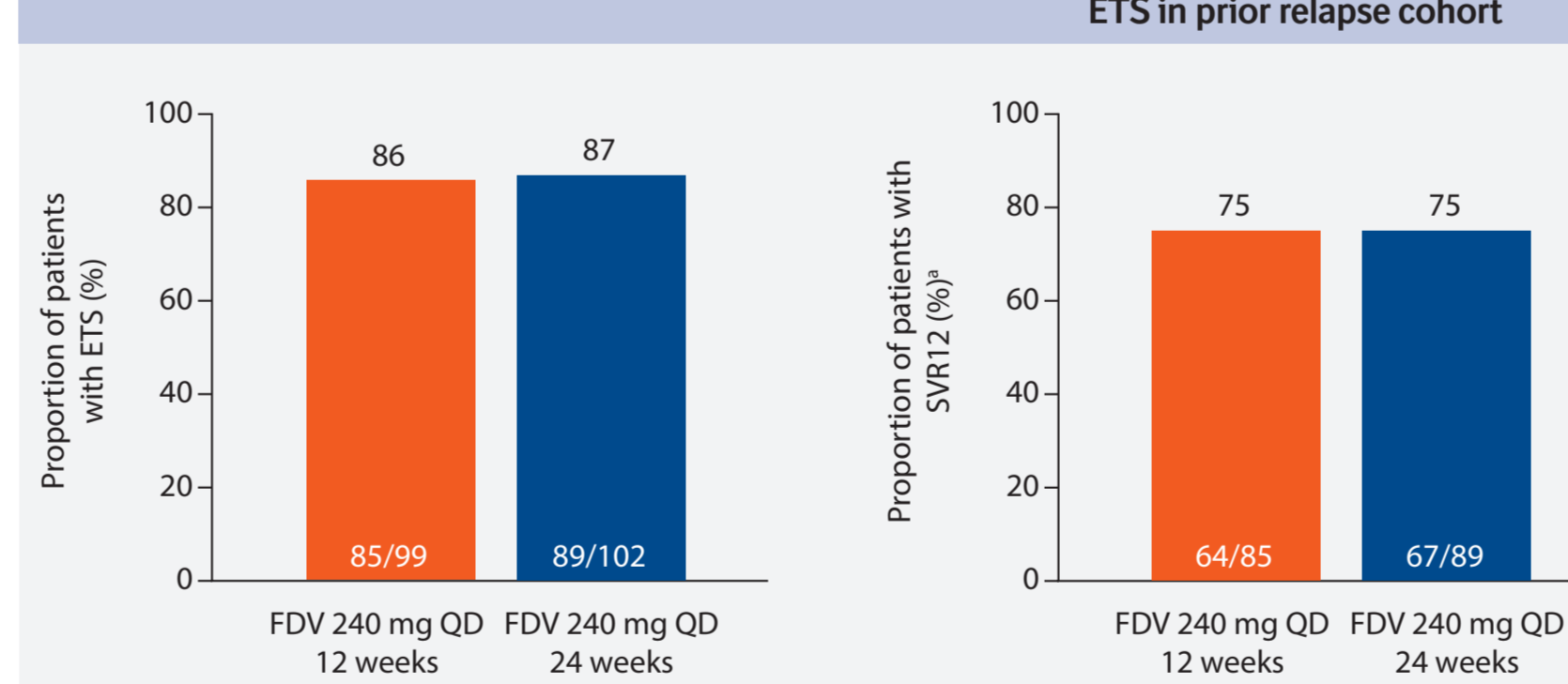
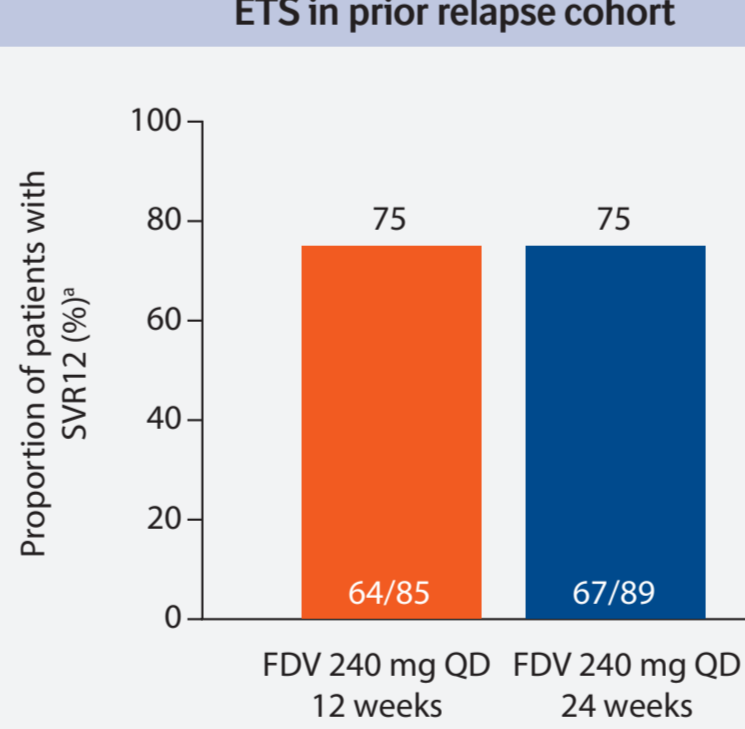


FIGURE 8b. SVR12 in patients who achieved ETS in prior relapse cohort



*Denominator = patients with ETS. ETS, early treatment success; HCV RNA <25 IU/mL (detected or undetected) at week 4 and <25 IU/mL (undetected) at week 8. Response-guided therapy based on achievement of ETS was only for prior relapsers.

IMPACT OF EMERGENT RESISTANCE-ASSOCIATED VARIANTS (RAVs) AND BASELINE POLYMORPHISMS

- The most common emergent RAVs in FDV-treated patients who failed to achieve SVR12 were NS3 R155K (GT-1a) and substitutions at D168 (GT-1b).
- None of the common GT-1a or GT-1b NS3 polymorphisms detected at baseline were found to reduce SVR12 in any cohort, including the Q80K polymorphism.
 - Q80K was detected in 85/308 (28%) of patients infected with HCV GT-1a with available sequence data.
 - No impact on the virologic response to FDV.
- In all 3 cohorts combined, SVR12 was achieved in 30/75 (40%) of patients with Q80K polymorphism vs 82/195 (42%) of patients without the Q80K substitution.

PRIOR NULL RESPONSE COHORT

FIGURE 6. SVR12 rates (ITT population)

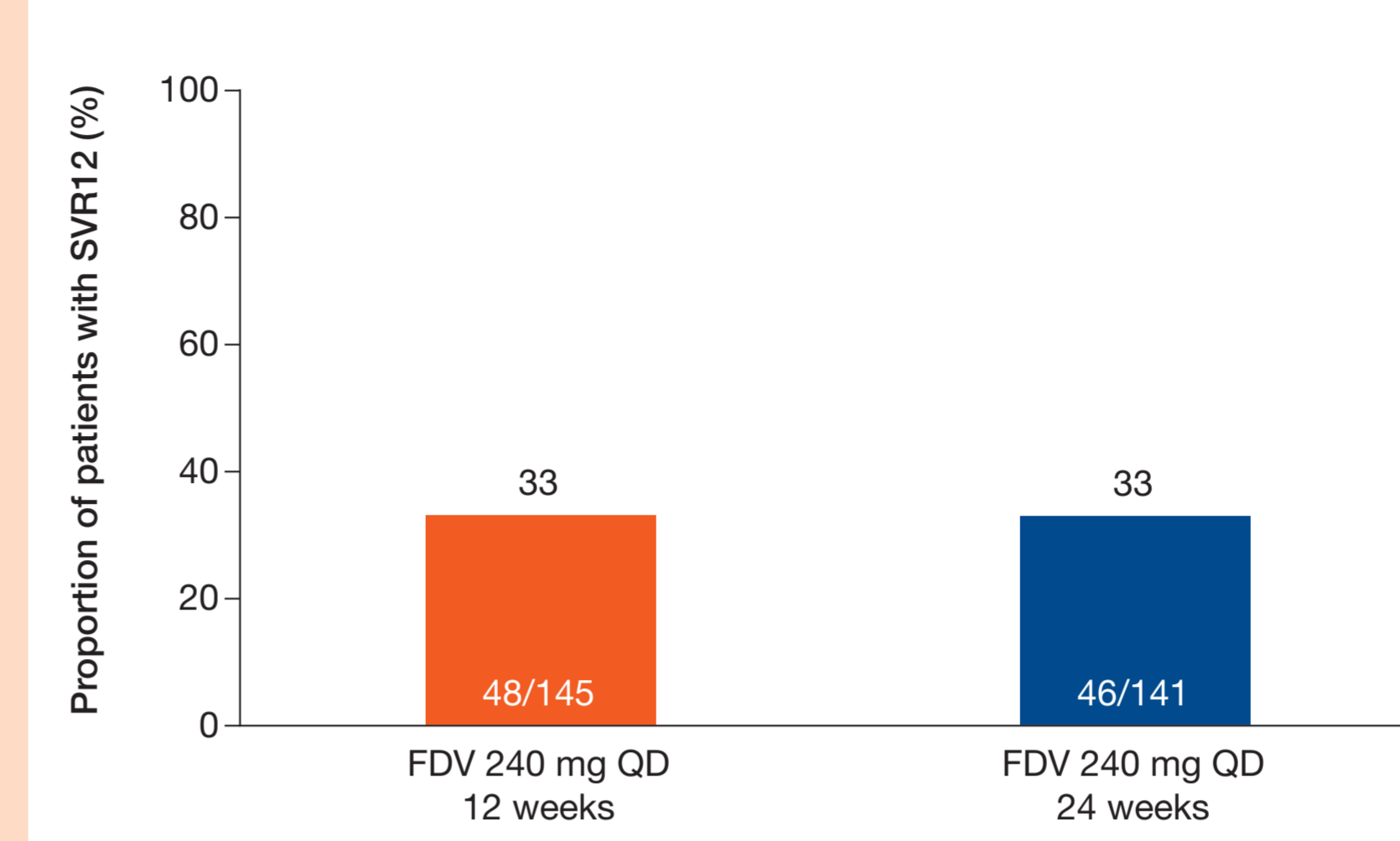
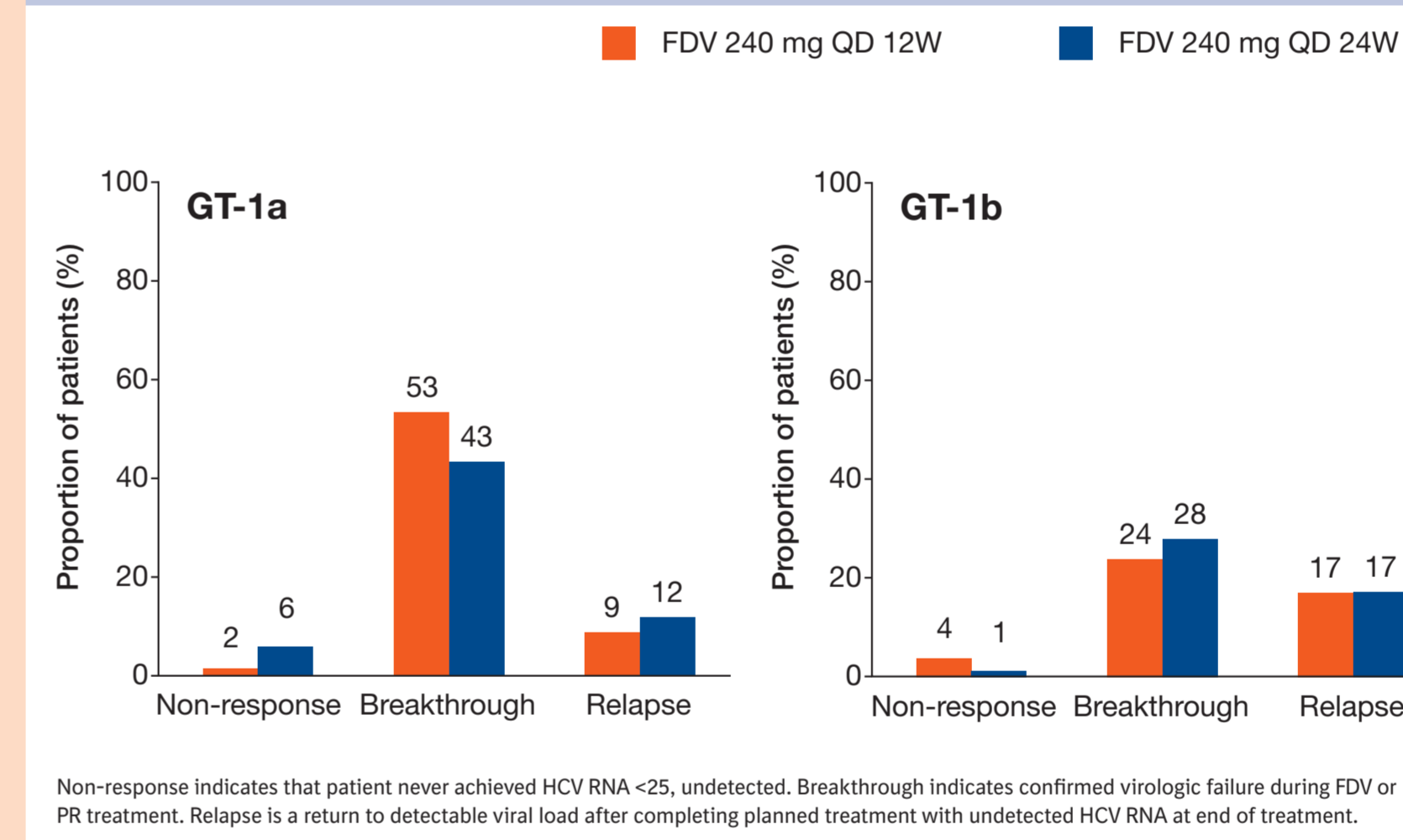


TABLE 4. SVR12 in patient subgroups

SVR12	12 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=145)	24 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=141)
HCV GT-1 subtype, n/N (%)		
GT-1a	17/66 (26)	15/69 (22)
GT-1b	30/78 (39)	31/72 (43)
IL28B, n/N (%)		
CC	5/8 (63)	5/10 (50)
CT	34/100 (34)	36/99 (36)
TT	9/35 (26)	5/32 (16)
Cirrhosis, n/N (%)		
Yes	5/40 (13)	7/40 (18)
No	43/105 (41)	39/101 (39)

FIGURE 7. Virologic failure for GT-1a and GT-1b patients



SAFETY

- In concordance with treatment-naïve studies, a favorable safety profile, with only slightly increased rates of AE over PBO, was observed at the tested higher dose (240 mg QD) of FDV (Table 5).
- All study medications were discontinued in 6% and 5% of patients with AEs in the FDV + PR 12- and 24-week arms, respectively (Table 5).
- Incidence of AEs of at least moderate intensity was similar across treatment arms and cohorts (Table 5).
- In FDV-treated patients, gastrointestinal events were the most commonly occurring AE (Table 5).
- Rash, photosensitivity, and jaundice occurred in $\leq 5\%$ of FDV-treated patients.
- Four deaths were reported during this trial, none of which were considered to be related to study medication.
 - Two deaths occurred in the post-treatment period (<30 days post treatment).
 - Further two deaths occurred >30 days post-treatment.

TABLE 5. AE summary

	Placebo + PR (N=78)	12 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=301)	24 weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=298)
Any AE, n (%)	74 (95)	292 (97)	295 (99)
AEs leading to discontinuation of all study medications, n (%) ^a	0 (0)	18 (6)	16 (5)
AEs leading to discontinuation of FDV or placebo, n (%)	0 (0)	23 (7)	24 (8)
AE of at least moderate intensity, n (%) ^b	35 (45)	175 (58)	177 (59)
AEs of interest of at least moderate intensity by preferred term, n (%) ^c			
Gastrointestinal	5 (6)	59 (20)	52 (17)
Anemia ^d	4 (5)	30 (10)	31 (10)
Any serious AE, n (%)	1 (1)	30 (10)	24 (8)
Deaths, n (%) ^e	0 (0)	1 (0.3)	1 (0.3)

^aOne patient in the FDV 240 mg QD 24-week arm discontinued treatment due to hyperbilirubinemia considered related to study drug. ^bBased on DAIDS grading system (Grade 2-moderate; Grade 3-severe; Grade 4-life-threatening). ^cSerious AEs with frequency of $\geq 5\%$ in any treatment arm. ^dIronemia was defined by investigator. ^eDeaths occurring >30 days post treatment and not considered related to study medication. A patient in the null-responder cohort, who died of sepsis. A patient in the partial-responder cohort, who died from multiple injuries caused by a fall. AE, adverse event; DAIDS, Division of AIDS Table for Grading the Severity of Adult and Pediatric Adverse Events; PBO, placebo.

LABORATORY ABNORMALITIES

- Laboratory abnormalities of at least moderate intensity in white blood cells and neutrophils were similar across treatment arms in all cohorts (Table 6).
- Rates of low hemoglobin (defined as <10 g/dL or <8.5 g/dL) were similar in FDV 12-week and 24-week groups using both cut-off points (Table 6).
- Observed bilirubin elevations were characterized by predominantly unconjugated bilirubin.
 - Peaked around week 2 and rapidly returned to baseline levels shortly after completion of FDV treatment.
 - In vitro studies suggest these increases are predominantly due to FDV-mediated inhibition of the bilirubin-conjugating enzyme UDP-glucuronosyltransferase-1A1 (UGT1A1).⁵

TABLE 6. Laboratory abnormalities of interest

	Placebo + PR (N=78)	Prior relapse and partial response		Prior null response	
		12-weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=156)	24-weeks FDV 240 mg QD + PR (N=157)	12-weeks 240 mg QD + PR (N=145)	24-weeks 240 mg QD + PR (N=141)
White blood cells, Grade ≥ 3 (<1500/mm ³), n (%)	3 (4)	9 (6)	10 (6)	4 (3)	7 (5)
Neutrophils, Grade ≥ 3 (<750/mm ³), n (%)	10 (13)	21 (13)	20 (13)	13 (9)	15 (11)
ALT, Grade ≥ 3 ($\geq 5 \times$ ULN), n (%)	1 (1)	3 (2)	3 (2)	3 (2)	2 (1)
Total bilirubin, n (%)					