

**ENROLLMENT
PHASE**

TREATMENT PHASE

FOLLOW-UP PHASE

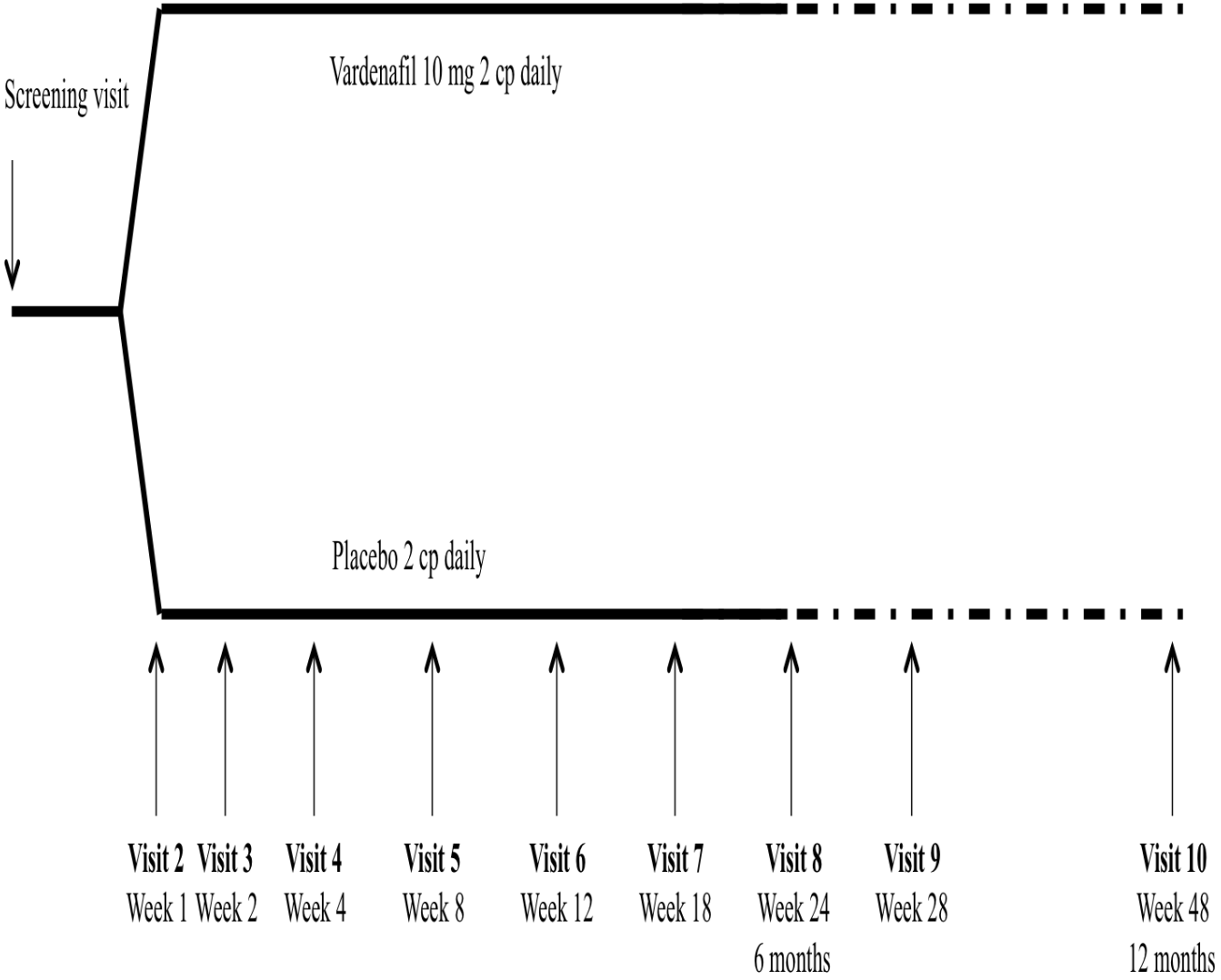


Table S1. Comparison of endothelial health-related parameters in the study group, according to main risk factors.

	Smokers	Non-smokers	p-value	Hypertensive	Non-hypertensive	p-value
Number of patients	11	15	-	13	14	
FMD (%)						
<i>Baseline</i>	7.58±3.90	7.41±4.88	0.100	7.91±3.49	7.08±5.18	0.012
<i>End of treatment</i>	6.94±2.73	7.74±4.12	0.190	7.26±3.10	7.49±4.03	0.833
<i>End of follow-up</i>	6.79±4.35	6.43±3.81	0.826	6.86±4.12	6.29±3.99	0.643
p-value	0.266	0.732		0.648	0.402	
Fibrinogen (mg/dL)						
<i>Baseline</i>	318.36±56.76	287.61±66.60	<0.001	315.72±62.55	290.15±62.61	0.001
<i>End of treatment</i>	315.70±62.31	262.18±66.06	0.087	301.54±71.59	274.48±58.61	0.183
<i>End of follow-up</i>	296.68±58.81	262.30±58.81	0.284	289.37±63.71	267.38±53.87	0.221
p-value	0.221	0.572		0.331	0.399	
hsCRP (mg/dL)						
<i>Baseline</i>	0.28±0.34	0.24±0.51	0.006	0.29±0.35	0.19±0.50	0.010
<i>End of treatment</i>	0.32±0.45	0.29±0.07	0.421	0.25±0.42	0.15±0.19	0.301
<i>End of follow-up</i>	0.25±0.21	0.21±0.11	0.237	0.24±0.21	0.12±0.39	0.015
p-value	0.921	0.955		0.810	0.327	
IL-6 (pg/mL)						
<i>Baseline</i>	4.04±1.64	3.79±1.53	0.038	4.23±1.69	3.79±1.44	0.163
<i>End of treatment</i>	3.70±1.90	2.91±1.15	0.287	3.37±1.51	3.21±1.72	0.751
<i>End of follow-up</i>	3.09±1.08	2.38±1.08	0.162	3.01±1.12	2.43±0.79	0.060
p-value	0.082	0.433		0.054	0.013	
ET-1 (pg/mL)						
<i>Baseline</i>	1.65±0.34	1.21±0.26	<0.001	1.48±0.39	1.36±0.36	0.245
<i>End of treatment</i>	1.55±0.35	1.23±0.36	0.005	1.43±0.37	1.33±0.41	0.373
<i>End of follow-up</i>	1.53±0.43	1.10±0.25	<0.001	1.36±0.43	1.26±0.39	0.403
p-value	0.746	0.820		0.994	0.923	

Table S2. Spearman's correlation among endothelial health-related parameters in study (A) and control group (B). ET-1: Endothelin-1. Hs-CRP: high-sensitivity C-reactive protein. ICAM-1: intercellular chemotactic protein-1. IL-6: interleukin-6. FMD: flow-mediated dilation. VCAM-1: vascular cell adhesion molecule-1.

A.		FMD	IL-6	hs-CRP	ET-1	ICAM-1	VCAM-1
FMD	Spearman's coefficient	1.000	.124	.167	.115	.310	.107
	Significance	.	.324	.183	.362	.012	.396
	Number	65	65	65	65	65	65
IL-6	Spearman's coefficient	.124	1.000	.275	.172	.484	.259
	Significance	.324	.	.000	.015	.000	.036
	Number	65	198	198	198	66	66
hs-CRP	Spearman's coefficient	.167	.275	1.000	.256	.272	-.181
	Significance	.183	.000	.	.000	.027	.147
	Number	65	198	199	199	66	66
ET-1	Spearman's coefficient	.115	.172	.256	1.000	.183	.106
	Significance	.362	.015	.000	.	.142	.399
	Number	65	198	199	199	66	66
ICAM-1	Spearman's coefficient	.310	.484	.272	.183	1.000	.106
	Significance	.012	.000	.027	.142	.	.398
	Number	65	66	66	66	66	66
VCAM-1	Spearman's coefficient	.107	.25	-.181	.106	.106	1.000
	Significance	.396	.036	.147	.399	.398	.
	Number	65	66	66	66	66	66

B.		FMD	IL-6	hs-CRP	ET-1	ICAM-1	VCAM-1
FMD	Spearman's coefficient	1.000	.105	-.097	-.023	-.138	-.010
	Significance	.	.388	.425	.847	.258	.935
	Number	78	70	70	70	69	70
IL-6	Spearman's coefficient	.105	1.000	.237	.059	.053	.151
	Significance	.388	.	.000	.367	.657	.200
	Number	70	234	234	233	73	74
hs-CRP	Spearman's coefficient	-.097	.237	1.000	-.055	-.023	.030
	Significance	.425	.000	.	.403	.849	.796
	Number	70	234	235	234	73	74
ET-1	Spearman's coefficient	-.023	.059	-.055	1.000	.019	.063
	Significance	.847	.367	.403	.	.871	.592
	Number	70	233	234	234	73	74
ICAM-1	Spearman's coefficient	-.138	.053	-.023	.019	1.000	-.208
	Significance	.258	.657	.849	.871	.	.074
	Number	69	73	73	73	75	75
VCAM-1	Spearman's coefficient	-.010	.151	.030	.063	-.208	1.000
	Significance	.935	.200	.796	.592	.074	.
	Number	70	74	74	74	75	76

Table S3. Comparison of Interleukin (IL)-6 serum levels between study and control group, at each visit of the study.

	Study Group	Control Group	p-value
Number of patients	26	28	
<i>Visit 2 – Baseline</i>	4.24±1.81	4.01±1.29	0.144
<i>Visit 3</i>	3.60±1.54	3.54±1.25	0.881
<i>Visit 4</i>	3.61±1.19	4.27±2.43	0.233
<i>Visit 5</i>	3.40±0.98	3.45±1.41	0.906
<i>Visit 6</i>	3.57±0.88	3.81±2.16	0.049
<i>Visit 7</i>	2.99±0.91	3.45±1.93	0.040
<i>Visit 8 – End of treatment phase</i>	2.67±0.99	3.79±1.81	0.017
<i>Visit 9</i>	2.69±1.13	3.34±1.87	0.030
<i>Visit 10 – End of the study</i>	2.69±0.90	2.95±1.11	0.871
<i>p-value</i>	<0.001	0.181	