**RANDOMISATION PROCEDURE**

**Study groups**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Number of participants | Treatment |
| Experimental group | 30 | Entecavir + Metformin |
| Control group | 30 | Entecavir + Placebo |

**Sequence generation**

The random allocation sequence in the block size of four was generated using a computer algorithm and the 60 numbers of 001-060 were randomly assigned to the experimental and control group at the ratio of 1:1. After successful screening, 60 eligible patients would be enrolled in this clinical trial and numbered in the order of 001-060 rigorously.

**Allocation concealment**

Sequentially numbered containers were used to conceal the random allocation. The numbers randomly assigned to the experimental group were labelled to the surface of the containers for sustained-release metformin hydrochloride tablets, while the numbers randomly assigned to the control group to the surface of the containers for placebo tablets. Then these two types of containers were fully mixed. Since the appearance, size, colour, weight, odour, taste, and packaging of these two agents are identical, it is impossible to distinguish them. After the eligible patients are enrolled and numbered in the order of 001-060, the corresponding agents should be distributed to them according to their numbering order rigorously.

**Implementation**

Sustained-release metformin hydrochloride and placebo tablets were both manufactured by a qualified pharmaceutical corporation under the conditions of good manufacturing practice and their appearance, size, colour, weight, odour, taste, and packaging were made identical. The random allocation sequence was generated by a qualified contract research organisation using a computer algorithm. The eligible patients were enrolled and numbered by a designated investigator in the order of 001-060, and the corresponding agents were distributed to them by another designated investigator according to their numbering order rigorously. The patients and investigators involved in this clinical trial were all blinded to the random allocation, which would be revealed after the outcome assessments and statistical analyses were all completed.