

P03-12

PREVALENCE OF EXTRAPYRAMIDAL SIDE EFFECTS IN PATIENTS RECEIVING DEPOT ANTIPSYCHOTIC MEDICATION

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Introduction: Long-acting depot antipsychotic medication is associated with extrapyramidal side effects (EPS). This may reduce adherence to medication, and precipitate relapse (1). Clearly, EPS is a major drawback and early detection is essential. However, in an earlier review of patients' medical notes, we identified only one patient with an examination that recorded the presence of EPS. Despite the fact that a number of rating scales are available. We proposed that the application of these rating scales, would allow us to improve the assessment of EPS.

Method: All patients prescribed a depot antipsychotic or long-acting risperidone injection, were identified. The Barnes Akathisia Scale (2) was chosen to rate akathisia, a modified Simpson-Angus scale (3) was chosen to rate parkinsonism and the Abnormal Involuntary Movement Scale (4) was chosen to rate tardive dyskinesia.

Results: A total of 43 patients were evaluated. 23 (53%) patients showed drug induced EPS. The total number of positive cases of akathisia was 12 (28%), and 10 (23%) patients were found to have tardive dyskinesia. 13 (30%) patients were found to have drug induced parkinsonism.

Conclusions: Our screening programme has identified high rates of previously undiscovered drug induced EPS.

References:

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- (4) Weiner and Lang (1995) *Neurology of mental disorders: Advances in Neurology*. New York: Raven Press.