ABSTRACT

Background/Objective: Antipsychotic Polypharmacy has been widely used in treatment of patients with chronic mental illness. Evidence supporting its use is limited. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effect of reduction of Antipsychotic Polypharmacy and its usefulness as a treatment.

Method: To objectively measure the impact of this change we used PANSS scale (Positive and Negative Symptoms of Schizophrenia). Patients’ laboratory metabolic parameters as well as weight, height and waist circumference were obtained, and BMI calculated. Hospitalization was measured.

Results: Psychiatric symptoms and metabolic indicators were evaluated at baseline and after treatment. 23 patients were interviewed at baseline and 18 of these were interviewed 6 months after being taken off Polypharmacy. Results showed no changes in psychiatric symptoms, as assessed with PANSS, after being taken off Polypharmacy. Results also showed that waist circumference was significantly smaller after being taken off Polypharmacy (M = 40.53, SD = 6.74) than at baseline (M = 42.08, SD = 6.43). For triglyceride levels (M = 174.88, SD = 30.37) than at baseline (M = 198.56, SD = 54.69). For BMI (M = 29.55, SD = 11.30) than at baseline (M = 37.19, SD = 48.95).

CONCLUSION

There have been number of concerns that have been raised due to this practice. Antipsychotic Polypharmacy has been associated with increased side effects, drug interactions, decline in patient’s adherence and increased cost of treatment. The Randomized Controlled Trials and other studies in treatment resistant patients show mixed results and increase in side effects with Antipsychotic Polypharmacy. The control studies were the ones that are more likely to show no better effect of Antipsychotic Polypharmacy. Patients without resistance to monotherapy research does not support the use of Antipsychotic Polypharmacy. All patients besides one remained psychiatrically stable and did not change much from their baseline. Their metabolic parameters improved in general although only the improvement of their waist circumference and triglyceride levels was statistically significant. Limitations

Open label, no control group
Small number of participants, only 18 were followed.

REFERENCES

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