

Drug addiction and treatment compliance

Shirley Taniguchi
University of São Paulo, Brazil.



Abstract

Statement of the problem: Neuroleptic-induced extrapyramidal symptoms may hinder adherence to drug rehabilitation treatment.

Methodology and Theoretical Orientations:

This study included 32 patients (mean age of 33.61 ± 1.90) admitted to a public mental health service in São Paulo (Brazil) due to psychotic symptoms associated with illicit drug use.

Findings: A total of 80.65% of patients were addicted to alcohol alone or alcohol plus cocaine or crack, while 19.35% were addicted to cocaine or crack cocaine. Psychosis (73.08%), aggressive behavior (7.69%), and withdrawal syndrome (11.10%), while no effects were registered in the remaining 7.69%. Among cocaine abusers, we observed hallucinations and delirium (50%), cardiovascular effects (27.76%), and psychomotor agitation (11.12%), while no effects were observed in the remaining 11.10%. Among crack users, we observed hallucinations and delirium (50%), and cardiovascular effects (37.50%), while no effects were observed among the remaining 12.50% of patients.

Hallucinations, delirium, psychomotor agitation and psychosis were treated with typical or atypical neuroleptics (96.88%) or anticonvulsants (3.12%). A total of 80.64% of patients receiving neuroleptics had extrapyramidal symptoms (acute dystonia akathisia, pharmacological parkinsonism), which were treated with a centrally acting anticholinergic drug-biperiden (60%) or anticonvulsants/anti histaminics (40%).

Conclusions and significance:

Professionals should reconsider the use of typical neuroleptics to treat drug-induced hallucinations, delirium and psychosis. Their side effects make it difficult for patients to adhere to treatment. Thus, any neuroleptic-induced side effects should always be carefully monitored.



Biography:

Shirley earned her M.S. in Pharmacology at the University of São Paulo in 1993. From 1994-1996, she worked as a researcher for the Japanese Ministry of Education in the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Kitasato in Tokyo. She has been an instructor in Pharmacology since 1997 and a researcher at the Medical School at the University of São Paulo (Faculdade de Medicina /Universidade de São Paulo). Shirley has been teaching undergraduate Pharmacology classes within Healthcare courses under the theme 'Education to Prevent the Misuse of Drugs'.

Her assistance is requested whenever there is difficulty associated with the pharmacological treatment in any given sector within different hospitals. Through research projects registered with the Ministry of Health, Shirley accesses and analyzes medical records to propose pharmacological care to complement patients' treatments and minimize risks. Shirley has assisted in research with drugs in the Intensive Care Unit, Urgent Care, sedation in oncology, and in Psychiatry, Geriatrics and Pediatrics departments.

Speaker Publications:

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