

PREGABALIN ABUSE - A CASE REPORT

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Pregabalin is a medication with anticonvulsant, anxiolytic and analgesic effects. In Slovenia the indications for its use are neuropathic pain, some types of epilepsy and generalised anxiety disorder. There is a lot of off-label clinical use of pregabalin (e.g. bipolar disorder, insomnia, fibromyalgia, restless leg syndrome). Because of its GABA analogue activity without directly interfering with GABA metabolism there have been proposals for its use as the main therapy for benzodiazepine and alcohol withdrawal treatment. Coincidentally there has been a growing number of reports showing abuse and potential dependency following 15 years since it has been on the market. We will present a case report of a 55-years-old woman with alcohol use disorder and generalized anxiety disorder. Pregabalin was used for anxiety treatment, but the patient started to abuse it. Our aim is to review published data and literature of pregabalin abuse and/or dependence, since it is a widely used substance with an increasing number of prescriptions.

Key words: pregabalin - dependency - abuse - psychiatry

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KETAMINE - UNDRAWN LINES BETWEEN MEDICAL AND RECREATIONAL USE - IMPLICATIONS FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE

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Ketamine, synthesized in 1962, approved in 1970, is considered safe for use in controlled conditions, mainly as an anesthetic, especially in pediatric populations and in people suffering from pulmonary diseases, as well as in emergency departments and in war situations. Dissociative states (derealization and depersonalization) produced by ketamine made it a popular recreational drug, which led to increased regulation in most countries. Intravenous application of ketamine has shown rapid, although transitory antidepressant and antisuicidal effects in patients with unipolar and bipolar depression. Esketamine, the S(+) enantiomer of ketamine, with better pharmacodynamic selectivity, has just been approved for treatment-resistant major depressive disorder, in the form of a nasal spray. Presently, the high cost of the spray not only limits its widespread use, but also makes it less prone to abuse and diversion. Additional measures are needed to hinder it from becoming a new "street drug".

Key words: ketamine - esketamine - antidepressant - ketamine abuse

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HIGH-DOSE METHYLPHENIDATE USE PRIOR TO HOSPITALIZATION EXACERBATES THE WITHDRAWAL SYNDROME IN INPATIENTS TREATED FOR OPIOID AND SEDATIVE-HYPNOTIC CO-DEPENDENCE - CASE SERIES AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Methylphenidate (MPD) is a drug used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and narcolepsy. Due to its stimulant qualities, illicit use is common in some populations. Cognitive side effects of excessive doses of MPD are widely reported in the literature. Less is known about illicit use of high-dose MPD in polydrug users and its influence on withdrawal symptoms of other psychoactive substances. We

report two clinical cases of inpatients treated for opioid and sedative-hypnotic co-dependence, in which prolonged use of high-dose MPD prior to hospitalization seemed the most important factor affecting withdrawal syndrome duration and severity.

Key words: methylphenidate - sedative-hypnotics - withdrawal

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AMISULPRIDE REDUCES CRAVING IN PATIENTS WITH GBL ADDICTION - CASE SERIES AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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γ-butyrolactone (GBL), a prodrug of γ-hydroxybutyric acid (GHB), is increasingly abused, mainly as a recreational intoxicant with subjective effects similar to barbiturates. Its popularity might be due to not being classified as an illegal substance in many jurisdictions. At lower doses it has euphoric effects, while sedative effects are prominent at higher doses. Many users enhance its effects with other psychostimulants, such as MDMA or amphetamines. When consumed frequently or in excessive amounts, physical and psychological dependence can develop. GBL and GHB act as GABA-B receptor agonists and GHB-receptor agonists. GABA-B agonists, like baclofen, are useful in acute GBL/GHB withdrawal but are insufficient in long term therapy of GBL/GHL addiction. Benzamide antipsychotics were found to upregulate GHB receptors. We report a case of two GBL-addicted patients who were treated with low to moderate doses of amisulpride. Amisulpride was found to reduce cravings for GBL, as well as GBL-seeking behavior. Benzamide antipsychotics might be useful in long-term treatment of GBL/GHB addiction.

Key words: amisulpride - GHB - GBL

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DO CANNABIS AND CANNABINOIDS HAVE A PSYCHOPHARMACOTHERAPEUTIC EFFECT?

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Backgrounds: Written historical evidence reveals that Cannabis sativa has been used medically, recreationally and spiritually for more than five centuries in many cultures. It is considered the most-used plant-based psychoactive substance with millions of different usages across the world. To review what the studies, conducted over the past two decades, indicate about effects of the cannabis on physical and mental health as well as the impact on social functioning.

Methods: We selected literature review using PubMed resources, to summarize the findings of the existing publications on cannabis and cannabinoids and their possible psychopharmacological therapeutic effects only.

Results: Research supports cannabis' clear acute effect on neurocognition, while non-acute effects for prolonged use of marijuana are unclear and still insufficiently explored. Due to cannabidiol's (CBD) safety and tolerability, the absence of psychoactive or cognitive effects, the existence of clinical trials with positive results and its broad pharmacological spectrum, CBD is a cannabinoid whose initial results will likely lead to implementation into clinical practice. The fact that the results of previous studies establish the claim of CBD as an antipsychotic and anxiolytic, makes the above developments even more likely. However, long-term, double-blind, placebo studies with samples of patients with different psychotic and anxiety disorders are still necessary. Likewise, due to CBD's biphasic effects, determining an adequate therapeutic dose remains a challenge to conclude, the cannabinoid system represents a promising target for new therapeutic interventions in psychiatry.