

THE ROLE OF ANTIPSYCHOTICS IN THE TREATMENT OF ANXIETY DISORDERS

A. Tiugan^{1,2}

¹Psychiatry, Clinical Emergency Military Hospital, ²Psychiatry, Medicine and Pharmacy University Craiova, Craiova, Romania

Introduction: Anxiety disorders appear following disturbances in the transmission of serotonin and noradrenaline caused by the dysfunction in the hypothalamic-pituitary-cortical-suprarenal axis and the hypothalamic-pituitary-thyroid axis. Our objective was to highlight the advantages of associating atypical antipsychotic substances (AAS) in small doses with the usual anxiolytic treatment (benzodiazepines, SSRI antidepressants, dual antidepressants etc).

Material and method: In a study performed on 40 patients with diagnosis of generalised anxiety disorder (DSM-IV-TR) an anxiolytic treatment of SSRI antidepressants (Sertraline 150mg/day) was administered to 20 patients, while SSRI antidepressant (Sertraline 150mg/day) associated with an atypical antipsychotic substance (Quetiapine 50mg/day) was administered to the other 20 patients during 6 months. The patients were monitored for another 12 months after conclusion of treatment.

Results: Anxiety symptomatology remitted in both groups of patients in a sensibly equal period. In the group where AAS were not administered, 10% of the patients presented an exacerbation of anxious symptomatology after 4 months of treatment. During the post-therapeutic monitoring period, the anxious symptomatology reappeared in 25% of the patients treated only with SSRI antidepressants, after 4 months, while relapse was found in only 5% of patients from the group treated also with AAS.

Conclusions: The association of small doses of atypical antipsychotic substances in the usual anxiolytic treatment with SSRI antidepressants leads to rapid remission of anxious symptomatology during treatment.

The use of atypical antipsychotic substance in the treatment of anxiety disorders prevents relapses on medium and long term.