



Changes to Prescribed Psychotropics Following Intentional Overdose

Lynn A Farrugia, Emily Gordon, Alexandra Sanseverino, Sean H Rhyee
Division of Medical Toxicology, Department of Emergency Medicine
University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, MA



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Background

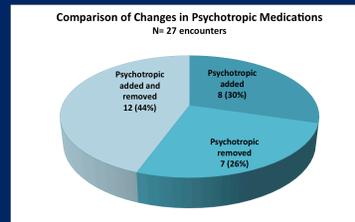
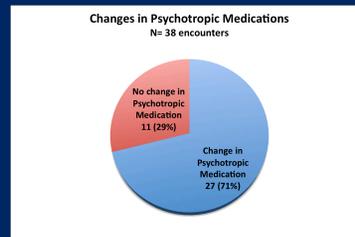
- Psychiatric guidelines regarding suicide risk include prescribing psychotropics with low risk of lethality.
- Hospital discharge following medication overdose is an opportunity to re-evaluate a patient's medications and choose medications with lower toxicity.

Objective

- To determine how frequently hospitalization for intentional drug overdose results in changes to prescribed medication regimen.

Methods

- This retrospective study was conducted at an urban tertiary care center and approved by the local Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- Patients with at least two visits between 11/2011 and 3/2014 were identified using TOXIDARE, a pre-existing database of all patients receiving a medical toxicology consult.
- Cases involving accidental ingestion, recreational use, non-medicinal ingestion, or incomplete records were excluded.
- Admission and discharge medication lists were recorded for each patient and compared; any medication changes at discharge or a subsequent presentation were identified.
- Additional data collected included: drugs used in overdose, demographics, and presence of suicidal intent.



Results

- Forty-four patients were initially identified, with 18 cases meeting inclusion criteria, accounting for 38 encounters.
- Of these, 17 had a single repeat presentation, and one had 4 presentations.
- Median age was 38 (range 18-59); 61% were female. Average time between presentations was 48 days (range of 3-177; median 36).
- Twenty-eight encounters (73.68%) involved a change in any prescribed medications.
- Four patients (22.2%) subsequently overdosed on the same prescribed medication(s), 5 (27.78%) used at least partially the same medications, and 8 (44.4%) used different medications.

Discussion

- A majority (71%) of patient encounters for medication overdose involved a change in prescribed psychotropics during the encounter, or at the next presentation.
- Study limitations include incomplete capture of re-presenting overdose patients and incomplete medical records.
- In future efforts we hope to collect greater numbers of patients and characterize whether the specific medication changes involve a change to medications associated with lower toxicity in overdose.

