

ABSTRACT

Prevalence and Severity of Smoking among Patients with Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder and the Effectiveness of Nicotine Replacement Therapy – An Observational Study

INTRODUCTION

People with mental illness are twice as likely to smoke, so there is a need to establish clarity regarding association of smoking and mental illness. Further, studies on effectiveness of nicotine replacement therapy yielded conflicting results. Hence, we studied the prevalence and severity of nicotine dependence suffering from schizophrenia and bipolar disorder and offered nicotine replacements to study its effectiveness in the follow up.

AIM

- 1) To assess prevalence and severity of nicotine dependence in patients suffering with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder
- 2) To study the effectiveness of nicotine replacements

METHODOLOGY

We recruited consecutive inpatients with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder and measured severity of illness using BPRS/YMRS/HDRS as suitable at baseline, 4th and 12th week. Fagerstrom test for nicotine dependence was used to assess severity of smoking at baseline, 4th and 12th week. Nicotine replacements were given to those who were willing.

RESULTS

The percentage of smokers among patients with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder were 44.2 % (n=19) and 34.0% (n=16) respectively. The severity of nicotine dependence fell in the mild to moderate category. At 4th week, 17.6 % of those who were diagnosed with schizophrenia and 58.3 % of those with bipolar disorder were abstinent. While at the 12th week, 26.7 % of schizophrenia and 63.7 % of bipolar disorder patients were abstinent ($X^2(1)=3.534, p=0.059$). 53.8% of those who continued nicotine replacement therapy at 4th week were abstinent [$X^2(1)=3.589, p=0.058$] and 88.9% at 12th week [$X^2(1)=10.77, p=0.01$]. The number of smokes showed a statistical significant reduction at 4th and 12th week when compared to baseline ($Z=-3.519, p=0.00; Z=-2.498, p=0.013$).

CONCLUSION

The prevalence of smoking among male schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder patients is higher than that of the general population. Greater number of patients with bipolar affective disorder had remained abstinent from smoking at 4th and 12th week. More number of patients who continued nicotine gum at 4th and 12th weeks remained abstinent from smoking.

Keywords

Smoking, Schizophrenia, Bipolar

