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Acta Medica Iranica

2009;47(4) : 367-372

Original Article

EFFICACY OF CITALOPRAM IN TREATMENT OF PATHOLOGICAL SKIN PICKING, A RANDOMIZED DOUBLE BLIND PLACEBO CONTROLLED TRIAL

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Received: March 22,2008
 Accept : April 30,2008
 Available online: December 1,2008

Abstract:

Various studies suggest that selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) may be useful in treating pathological skin picking (PSP). This study sought to assess effectiveness of citalopram in comparison with placebo in treating PSP. Forty five individuals with PSP were recruited in a four-week, randomized clinical trial of citalopram (20 mg/day) in comparison with placebo. Study measures assessing skin picking severity, mental health status, obsessive compulsive disorder and quality of life were given at baseline, weeks 2 and 4. PSP severity, general health status, obsession-compulsion severity and quality of life level were similar between two groups at baseline ($P > 0.05$). Treatment analyses revealed significant improvements in quality of life, general health status and obsession-compulsion severity in citalopram group compared to placebo group ($P < 0.05$). Mean PSP severity reduction in citalopram group was more than placebo group but this difference was not significant. Citalopram can improve general health status and quality of life in individuals with PSP but its effect on skin picking behavior doesn't differ significantly with placebo. Other trials with longer time are needed to determine the exact efficacy of citalopram on PSP

Keywords:

[Pathological skin picking](#) , [neurotic excoriation](#) , [citalopram](#)

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