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Nutrition Journal
Volume 4

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Omega-3 fatty acids decreased irritability of patients with bipolar disorder in an add-on, open label study

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Nutrition Journal 2005, 4:6 doi:10.1186/1475-2891-4-6

Published: 9 February 2005

Abstract

This is a report on a 37-patient continuation study of the open ended, Omega-3 Fatty Acid (O-3FA) add-on study. Subjects consisted of the original 19 patients, along with 18 new patients recruited and followed in the same fashion as the first nineteen. Subjects carried a DSM-IV-TR diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder and were visiting a Mood Disorder Clinic regularly through the length of the study. At each visit, patients' clinical status was monitored using the Clinical Monitoring Form. Subjects reported on the frequency and severity of irritability experienced during the preceding ten days; frequency was measured by way of percentage of days in which subjects experienced irritability, while severity of that irritability was rated on a Likert scale of 1 – 4 (if present). The irritability component of Young Mania Rating Scale (YMRS) was also recorded quarterly on 13 of the 39 patients consistently. Patients had persistent irritability despite their ongoing pharmacologic and psychotherapy.

Omega-3 Fatty Acid intake helped with the irritability component of patients suffering from bipolar disorder with a significant presenting sign of irritability. Low dose (1 to 2 grams per day), add-on O-3FA may also help with the irritability component of different clinical conditions, such as schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder and other psychiatric conditions with a common presenting sign of irritability.

