

The Effect of Pramipexole on Impulse Control and Other Behavioral Disorders in Idiopathic Restless Legs Syndrome

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Abstract

Restless legs syndrome (RLS) is characterized by unpleasant sensations in the legs that occur or worsen during rest and/or in the evening. Pramipexole is an effective treatment option for RLS. While dopamine agonists are associated with impulse control and other behavioral disorders (ICBD) in Parkinson's disease, there is limited consensus on their relationship with such disorders in RLS. This study aimed to evaluate the association between pramipexole treatment and ICBD in RLS patients. In this case-control cross-sectional study, ICBD were assessed using the PD-QUIP questionnaire and the Barratt Impulsivity Scale-11 Short Form (BIS-11 SF). Patients diagnosed with idiopathic RLS using the International Restless Legs Syndrome Study Group diagnostic criteria, aged over 18, without psychiatric disorders, and treated with pramipexole for at least one month, were included. Untreated RLS patients served as controls. The study included 108 patients, with 50.9% receiving pramipexole treatment. The BIS-11 SF total score was 31.79 ± 7.32 in the pramipexole-treated group and 30.35 ± 6.73 in the untreated group ($p=0.324$). No significant differences were found in total or subscale scores (attention: $p=0.232$, non-planning: $p=0.695$, motor impulsivity: $p=0.498$). Based on PD-QUIP results, ICBD were detected in 37% ($N=40$) of patients, with punning in 12 (11.1%), compulsive eating in 9 (8.3%), and hypersexuality in 1 patient (0.9%). The frequency of ICBD did not differ significantly between groups ($p=4.90$). These findings suggest that pramipexole treatment in RLS does not significantly affect ICBD development. Large-scale studies are warranted to further explore the impact and causality of pramipexole on ICBD.

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