

Combined Sulpiride, Olanzapine, and A Complex Isopathic Preparation for Delusional Disorder

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Keywords

Olanzapine, Sulpiride, Delusional disorder.

Introduction

Delusional disorder is a poorly understood psychotic disorder characterized by one or more persistent delusions of persecution, grandiosity, or jealousy (among others) for over a month [1]. Although antipsychotic drugs, antidepressants, and mood stabilizers have all been used to treat delusional disorder with varying degrees of success [1,2], there is growing interest in managing patients with psychological (psychotherapy, CBT) and/or alternative therapies, as delusional disorder is sometimes resistant to drug therapy and considered difficult to treat. While there are no high-quality randomized trials on delusional disorder treatment, both first- and second-generation antipsychotics have been used with effect, with olanzapine – a second-generation antipsychotic thought to act via the dopamine and serotonin pathways [3] - showing high recovery and partial improvement rates in affected individuals [1].

I previously showed that a low parenteral dose (20 mg) of the atypical antipsychotic sulpiride, when administered subcutaneously with a complex isopathic (homeopathic) remedy (the SULPYCO method), had a synergistic effect when used for the treatment of mild to moderate depression [4]. Sulpiride acts as a selective dopamine D2 and D3 receptor antagonist, particularly at the higher doses (600–1600 mg daily) used in acute psychosis [5]. While the mechanism of action of homeopathic remedies is rather less well understood than conventional therapies, patients often derive clinical benefit from their use [6,7].

Given the previous findings of potential synergy between antipsychotics and complex isopathy, I reasoned that patients with delusional disorder would derive benefit from combination

treatment with (i) a predominantly dopamine pathway antipsychotic (sulpiride) and complex homeopathy, and (ii) an antipsychotic with greater affinity for 5-HT_{2A} serotonin receptors (olanzapine) [3] and complex homeopathy. In this proof-of-concept study, this regimen was administered to a patient with delusional disorder with excellent results.

Methods

The exact composition and preparation of SULPYCO, an isotonic solution of 0.4 ml (20 mg) sulpiride and 2.2 ml of an isotonic solution of Coenzyme Compositum (Heel, Germany; patent reference: PCT HR 2010/000015) is described in a previous publication [4]. Here we also prepared 0.4 ml (0.4 mg) of an isotonic solution of olanzapine and 2.2 ml of an isotonic solution of Coenzyme Compositum. Each antipsychotic and Coenzyme Compositum preparation was mixed in a separate syringe. The two injections (“combination therapy”) were administered simultaneously subcutaneously in the waist region using a 23 G (0.6 × 25) needle daily.

The study was carried out in a private clinic using over-the-counter isopathic remedies and licensed antipsychotic drugs. In this case, the off-label dosing of antipsychotic drugs at very low doses in a patient otherwise resistant to receiving therapy and with an immediate clinical need was within Croatian prescribing guidelines and laws, so no Institutional Review Board approval was needed. Nevertheless, the patient provided informed consent.

Results

In this proof-of-concept study, the combination therapy was administered to a 74-year-old woman with a three-year history of the persecutory delusion that the government was trying to seize her property. The delusion was persistent, incurring a financial burden through hiring lawyers to defend her (fictitious) case. She did not

have any other psychiatric symptoms or hallucinations and she insisted that she did not have a mental illness. She refused to take oral medications, and there was no other significant past medical history or prescribed or illicit drug use. Physical examination was normal.

She consented to daily subcutaneous therapy with the combination of low-dose sulpiride and Coenzyme Compositum and low-dose olanzapine and Coenzyme Compositum. After starting combination therapy, her delusions resolved within two weeks, with remission persisting after four months of daily injections and without side-effects. Her family, who were very worried about the patient's delusions, in particular experienced relief at symptom resolution.

Discussion

Both sulpiride and olanzapine are atypical antipsychotic drugs used primarily at high-doses (600–1600 mg daily and 10 mg, respectively) for the treatment of psychosis [3]. Since both agents are available as parenteral preparations and act via different pathways, they were chosen as ideal candidates for combination at low doses with a parenteral homeopathic preparation.

The efficacy of this new combination therapy is likely to be due to a combination of conventional effects of sulpiride and olanzapine on dopamine-serotonin balance in the brain and the beneficial effects of homeopathy. The homeopathized isopathic (potentized) Krebs cycle components of Coenzyme Compositum are thought to act as non-specific metabolism activators [8]. Although some dispute the efficacy of homeopathic medicine, and it is widely suggested that homeopathy works via a placebo effect, there are competing opinions and a growing set of theories as to the mechanism of action [9, 10].

The homeopathic preparation used here may induce small changes in cellular energy production that synergize with sulpiride and olanzapine to improve their efficacy at lower doses. It is possible that symptom resolution was due to the placebo effect, although this is less likely since the patient had very limited insight into,

and even denied, her delusions. Nevertheless, the impressive symptom resolution and absence of side-effects suggest that this is a promising intervention for delusional disorder and should be further studied in larger clinical cohorts.

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