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## Clinical outcomes among patients with chronic low back pain treated with pregabalin monotherapy in fort portal regional referral hospital in western Uganda: A case series report

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**Introduction:** Chronic low back pain associated with radiculopathy is a common reason for physician visits but no guidelines are available for management of these patients in Uganda. A placebo controlled trial on efficacy of Pregabalin among patients with lumbosacral radiculopathy in Germany was inconclusive on the benefit of Pregabalin in reducing pain. In another study in USA using Pregabalin showed inferior effect of Pregabalin monotherapy to combination with Celecoxib on resolution of symptoms. We evaluated clinical response to Pregabalin monotherapy on low back pain associated with radiculopathy at the Orthopedics clinic of Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital in Western Uganda.

**Methods:** In this prospective study conducted from February to July 2015, 15 patients with chronic low back pain associated with radiculopathy exceeding 3 months were seen in the orthopedic outpatient clinic at Fort Portal Regional Referral and all were treated with a 4-week course of oral Pregabalin (75mg taken once a day) and evaluated for clinical improvement. Visual Analogue Score (VAS) for pain was used to assess the degree of pain among patients after 4 weeks of treatment. Structured questionnaires were used to capture socio-demographic and clinical data.

**Results:** Of the 15 patients 10 were females and 5 were males, with age range of 28-75 years and mean age 53 years. 3 patients were unable to walk before treatment due to pain. Before treatment with Pregabalin all the patients had visual analogue score of 8-10. After 4 weeks of treatment with oral Pregabalin, 13 patients showed significant improvement with reduction in the visual analogue score to 0-2 while 2 patients had modest reduction in Visual Analogue score of 6-8.

**Conclusion:** Oral Pregabalin has good effect on the treatment of patients with low back pain associated with radiculopathy. However further research is needed with sufficient sample, randomization and longer follow up.

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