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Efficacy of ketamine treatment in patients with unipolar treatment resistant depression

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Introduction: Major depressive disorder and bipolar disorder are associated with severe mood episodes. Various treatments exist for depressive symptoms; however, most primary pharmacologic treatments take weeks before amelioration of depressive symptoms. Intravenous ketamine is a novel treatment for major depressive episodes, with rapid action and minimal side-effects. In this presentation I will review the current scientific data on ketamine treatment and provide data on treatment outcomes from the first ketamine clinic in Poland.

Methods: This study consists of a retrospective analysis of treatment outcomes of 78 patients with unipolar and bipolar treatment resistant depression who were treated with intravenous ketamine infusions from 01.04.2020 up to 01.07.2021.

Results: The study search identified 78 patients who received a total of 356 infusions with the mean dose of 0,83mg/kg. Subjects were routinely assessed with the PHQ-9 scale before each infusion. At the beginning of treatment, the average PHQ-9 score was 16,4 (SD 6,78; n=78), after 3 infusions 13,2 (SD 5,23; n=64) and 10,1 (SD 6,47; n=45) after 6 infusions. The most frequent side effects were dissociation (74%), dizziness (56%), headache (42%), elevated blood pressure (23%), nausea (12%), vomiting (2%). The side-effects were limited to the days of infusions with no side-effects between sessions.

Conclusions: The results from the present study indicate that ketamine can be an effective pharmacologic intervention for unipolar and bipolar treatment resistant depression. The achieved results are consistent with the available scientific data from several studies and meta-analysis.

Biography

Piotr Marcinowicz is a graduate of the Faculty of Medicine at the Medical University of Wrocław, a doctor in the course of specialization at the Masovian Specialist Health Center in Pruszków. He works in the general psychiatric ward of the Tworski Hospital, is a PhD student and lecturer at the Medical University of Warsaw, participates in current clinical programs of new drugs in psychiatry and conducts his own research. The process of specialization education is supported by numerous foreign trainings – in 2018, incl. graduated from the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology Oxford Summer School and the Lundbeck Academy. He presented the results of his research with honors at the European Psychiatric Congress in Barcelona. He especially specializes in the treatment of both chemical addictions (alcohol, drugs, drugs, legal highs) and behavioral addictions (gambling, eating, sex, pornography) and accompanying disorders (treatment with naltrexone and baclofen).

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