

Common high blood pressure meds affect mood disorders

October 10 2016



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Four commonly prescribed blood pressure medications may impact mood disorders such as depression or bipolar disorder, according to new research in the American Heart Association's journal *Hypertension*.

In this first study, that compared four common classes of antihypertensive drugs and risk of mood disorders, two drugs were associated with an increased risk for mood disorders, while one appears to decrease mood disorder risk, according to Sandosh Padmanabhan, M.D., Ph.D., study author and Professor at the Institute of Cardiovascular and Medical Sciences, University of Glasgow in Glasgow, United Kingdom.

"Mental health is under-recognized in hypertension clinical practice, and the possible impact of [antihypertensive drugs](#) on mental health is an area that physicians should be aware of and consider if the treatment of [high blood pressure](#) is having a negative impact on their patient's mental health," Padmanabhan said.

Researchers collected data on 525,046 [patients](#) (ages 40-80) from two large secondary care Scottish hospitals. They selected 144,066 patients being treated for hypertension with either angiotensin antagonists, beta blocker, [calcium channel blockers](#) or thiazide diuretics. They were compared to a group of 111,936 patients not taking any of those drugs. Researchers followed the patients for five years documenting hospitalization for mood disorders, such as depression or [bipolar disorder](#). After more than 90 days on the antihypertensive medications, they found:

There were 299 hospital admissions, predominantly due to major depression, among the patients studied, at an average 2.3 years after patients began antihypertensive treatment.

Patients on beta-blockers and calcium antagonists were at two-fold increased risk of hospital admission for mood disorder, compared to patients on angiotensin antagonists (angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors or angiotensin-receptor blockers).

Patients on angiotensin antagonists had the lowest risk for hospitalization with mood disorders compared to patients on other [blood pressure](#) meds and patients on no antihypertensive therapy.

Patients taking thiazide diuretics showed the same risk for mood disorders compared to patients taking no antihypertensive meds.

The presence of co-existing medical conditions increased the risk of mood disorders.

These findings suggest that angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors and angiotensin-receptor blockers that are used to treat hypertension may be useful as new or "repurposed" treatments for mood disorders, according to Padmanabhan.

"It is important that these results are validated in independent studies. This is a single center study, which looked at the risk of the more severe forms of [mood disorders](#) requiring hospitalization. It would be important to study the effect of these drugs on minor to modest changes in mood, as these will have an impact on the quality of life among hypertensive patients," he said.

Provided by American Heart Association

Citation: Common high blood pressure meds affect mood disorders (2016, October 10) retrieved 19 April 2024 from

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