

PSYCHOTROPICS AND SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR- A CASE-CONTROL STUDY

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Introduction: Suicidal behaviour is the cause of many frequent visits to the emergency room and is a serious health problem. The relationship between the use of a diverse range of psychotropics and suicidal behaviour is a cause of great controversy.

Objective: The objective of this study is to see if there exists a relationship between the consumption of antidepressants, antipsychotics and benzodiazepines and the apparition of suicidal behaviour.

Material and methods: A retrospective study of case histories and control groups was undertaken. The data was collated from the computerised clinical histories of in-patients at the “Unidad de Hospitalización Breve de Psiquiatría del Hospital San Telmo de Palencia” from 2006 to 2011. The cases used are those where the patient had a diagnosed suicidal tendency and for each case two controls were taken into consideration- age and gender. Exposure to the psychotropics was also taken into consideration in the three months previous to the appearance of suicidal behaviour. The raw odds were calculated and adjusted for severity of the condition within the confidence ratio.

Conclusions:

1. The anti-depressants are associated with a larger risk of suicidal behaviour. However the effect is not dependent on the seriousness of the patients condition.
2. The anti-psychotics are associated with a reduction in the suicidal behaviour which is congruent with the effect which they have on behaviour.
3. The benzodiazepines are associated with a slight increase of suicidal behaviours and the effects are more evident in the patients with less serious conditions.