



EXCESSIVE SEXUALITY DUE TO ARIPIPRAZOLE REDUCED ON SWITCHING TO HALOPERIDOL- A RARE CASE REPORT

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ABSTRACT Aripiprazole is an antipsychotic which has partial agonist activity at the dopamine D2 receptor that causes excessive sexuality. Here a 36-year-old unmarried male who had schizophrenia manifested excessive sexuality symptoms on being put on aripiprazole. Switching to haloperidol reduced hypersexual behaviors. Psychiatrists need to be aware of excessive sexuality with aripiprazole and should think about discontinuation of the drug in those having such symptoms and switching to some other safer options.

KEYWORDS : Aripiprazole, Hypersexual Behaviors, Haloperidol

INTRODUCTION

Aripiprazole is a 2nd generation antipsychotic [1]. It has partial agonist action at D2 receptor as well as 5-HT1A receptor and acts as an antagonist at the 5-HT2A receptor [1]. Aripiprazole due to such pharmacological properties can cause compulsive behaviors like gambling, shopping, and excessive sexuality [2]. Reports of hypersexuality after aripiprazole treatment are there [2-5]. Here, the symptoms started days to weeks after administration of the drug. Discontinuation of aripiprazole decreased hypersexuality symptoms over few weeks to a month. Here, we present a case of a male of 36 years age who had hypersexuality symptoms after receiving aripiprazole and had reduction of symptoms after being switched to haloperidol.

CASE REPORT

A 36 year old unmarried male presented with history of recent onset inappropriate sexual behavior in the form of sexual advances towards his sister ,masturbation in front of his colleagues at office for 10 days. He is a known case of schizophrenia with two episodes of exacerbation .The first one was five years back for which he was put on haloperidol 15 mg/day along with phenergan 25 mg/day. He was well maintained on it but defaulted eventually. His second exacerbation was 1 month back when he developed paranoid ideations,bizarre delusion and auditory hallucinations and was admitted and put on Aripiprazole 15 mg/day with trihexyphenidyl 4 mg/day.He developed the inappropriate sexual behavior 2 weeks following this treatment. Under our care, he was cross tapered to haloperidol 10mg a day over a course of a week and Aripiprazole was stopped. His sexually inappropriate behaviors stopped and the psychotic symptoms were also on hold.

DISCUSSION

Aripiprazole is one of the 2nd generation antipsychotic that has known to cause sexual side effects but on rare occasions [2-5].Here the patient had no inappropriate sexual symptoms before, when he was on haloperidol as well as a part of the illness. All these started after he was placed on Aripiprazole and stopped on switching back to haloperidol. Partial agonist action of Aripiprazole on D2 receptors and 5HT1A receptors are mostly the reason behind these[1,2].

CONCLUSION

To our knowledge there are only few cases reported on hypersexuality due to aripiprazole that was reversed by switching to Haloperidol. Clinicians must psychoeducate the family members regarding the same before starting anyone on Aripiprazole and monitor the sexual side effects during the subsequent visits of the patients.

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