Comparison of risperidone and aripiprazole in the treatment of preschool children with disruptive behavior disorder and attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder: A randomized clinical trial

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Abstract

Although pharmacotherapy with atypical antipsychotics is common in child psychiatry, there has been little research on this issue. To compare the efficacy and safety of risperidone and aripiprazole in the treatment of preschool children with disruptive behavior disorders comorbid with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Randomized clinical trial conducted in a university-affiliated child psychiatry clinic in southwest Iran. Forty 3-6-year-old children, diagnosed with oppositional defiant disorder comorbid with ADHD, were randomized to an 8-week trial of treatment with risperidone or aripiprazole (20 patients in each group). Assessment was performed by Conners' rating scale-revised and clinical global impressions scale, before treatment, and at weeks 2, 4, and 8 of treatment. The data were analyzed by SPSS version 16. Mean scores between the two groups were compared by analysis of variance and independent and paired t-test. Mean scores of Conners rating scales were not different between two groups in any steps of evaluation. Both groups had significantly reduced scores in week 2 of treatment (P = 0.00), with no significant change in subsequent measurements. Rates of improvement, mean increase in weight (P = 0.894), and mean change in fasting blood sugar (P = 0.671) were not significantly different between two groups. Mean serum prolactin showed a significant increase in risperidone group (P = 0.00). Both risperidone and aripiprazole were equally effective in reducing symptoms of ADHD and oppositional defiant disorder, and relatively safe, but high rates of side effects suggest the cautious use of these drugs in children.