Brief psychosis induced by methylphenidate in a child with attention deficit disorder: a case report and literature review.


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Abstract

Methylphenidate-induced psychosis has been scarcely studied due to bioethical and neurobiological issues regarding its research. Although some authors have hypothesized that there might be a vulnerability for the development of a major psychiatric disorder in the long term, there is no agreement about the predictive value of this type of psychosis in children and adolescents, and its origin is also uncertain. It has been suggested that higher dopamine levels in some cerebral regions and a family history of mental disorders might increase the risk of psychosis secondary to psychostimulants. We present the case of a nine-year-old child diagnosed with attention deficit disorder and oppositional defiant disorder, who exhibited visual and auditory hallucinations and delirious ideas about harm during methylphenidate treatment. The patients symptoms regressed after drug removal. We discuss the key issues related to the origin, causality, management, and prognosis of psychostimulant-induced psychosis.