Patient and provider characteristics related to prescribing of ADHD medication: Nationwide health insurance claims database study in Korea.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:
Little is known about the association between prescribing of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medication and the patient's age, gender, and type of medical institution in Asia region.

INTRODUCTION:
This study investigates the prevalence and factors of diagnosis and pharmacological treatment of ADHD in the pediatric population.

METHODS:
Using the Korea Health Insurance database, study participants were identified as pediatric patients (≤17 years) with at least 1 diagnosis of ADHD (ICD-10, F90) from January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2011. The annual prevalence of ADHD diagnosis and medication was calculated. Annual differences in the prevalence between 2007 and 2011 with 95% confidence intervals (CIs) were estimated. We conducted multiple logistic regression analysis to estimate adjusted odds ratios (aORs) and their 95% CI to investigate predictors associated with prescribing of ADHD medication.

RESULTS:
The prevalence of ADHD medication prescribing increased by 26.57% (95% CI, 26.27-26.88) from 0.53% in 2007 to 0.72% in 2011. The prevalence increased by 41.56% (95% CI, 40.51-42.65) in females compared with 34.91% (95% CI, 34.47-35.36) in males. Whereas the prevalence decreased in patients younger than 6 years old, it increased by 74.30% (95% CI, 72.84-75.79) in the 13 to 17-year group. Males were more likely than females to be treated with ADHD medication (aOR, 1.12; 95% CI, 1.10-1.13). Physician specialty (psychiatry vs non-psychiatry) (aOR, 1.37; 95% CI, 1.34-1.40) were associated with prescribing of ADHD medication.

CONCLUSION:
Rapid increases in the diagnosis and pharmacological treatment of ADHD in the pediatric population have been observed. While demographic characteristics were similar to other countries, provider characteristics were different with others reporting that the majority of patients were treated by physicians specializing in psychiatry.