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SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION IN PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA TREATED WITH ANTIPSYCHOTICS

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Introduction: The relationship between sexuality and schizophrenia is complex. The prevalence of sexual dysfunctions is higher in persons with mental disorders and may be related to both the psychopathology and the pharmacotherapy. On one hand the negative symptoms of schizophrenia limit the capability for interpersonal and sexual relationships; on the other hand several mechanisms can cause sexual dysfunction during antipsychotic therapy. Although it is a troublesome side effect, information on antipsychotic-induced sexual dysfunction is limited. The aim of this study was to evaluate the sexual dysfunction and its impact in patients with a psychotic disorder treated with various antipsychotics under routine clinical conditions.

Methods: Subjects included were sexually active male and female patients 18 years of age or older with the diagnosis of Schizophrenia, Schizophreniform disorder, Schizoaffective disorder or other psychotic disorder. In addition to sexual functioning, was recorded demographic data, psychiatric diagnosis and medication history. The instrument of evaluation used was the Pyschotropic-Related Sexual Dysfunction Questionnaire (PRSexDQ-SalSex).

Results: All the analyses were performed in the 101 evaluable patients. Most patients were males (76%) and the most common diagnosis was Schizophrenia.Overall, the patients exhibited sexual dysfunction according to the assessment with the SalSex. Among the patients exhibiting sexual dysfunction, a third reported to have poor tolerance to the disturbance.

Conclusions: Sexual dysfunction is very common in patients receiving long-term treatment with antipsychotics and it is associated with a great impact in a substantial proportion of patients.

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