

Medication adherence in patients with Parkinson's disease treated at a specialized ambulatory

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Introduction: Parkinson's disease (PD) is universal and the second most common neurodegenerative disease in the elderly after Alzheimer's disease, with highly prevalent, affecting between 0.5 and 1% of the population aged between 65 and 69 years. Drug treatment is the main way to control the symptoms of PD. The goal of therapy is to increase dopaminergic activity in the basal ganglia and it is known that levodopa is the most commonly prescribed and effective drug for this purpose, promoting an improvement in the quality of life in these patients. Even though that adherence to antiparkinsonian medication is fundamental to achieving this improvement, maximizing the effect of medication and patient response to the drug, only recently it has been studied in patients with Parkinson's disease. **Objective:** Assess the compliance with antiparkinsonian therapy with levodopa in PD patients, as well as their knowledge about medication. **Methods:** This cross-sectional and descriptive study assessed medication adherence in 112 patients with Parkinson's disease treated with levodopa regularly attended in the outpatient movement disorders at the Hospital das Clínicas, Faculty of Medicine of Ribeirão Preto, University of São Paulo. The Morisky and Green test and the instrument that assesses attitudes of medicine intake (IAAFTR) were used to identify the degree of adherence to prescribed medication and the behavior of the patient toward the daily use of medication. Was also used a questionnaire that collected data to identify the participants, assess whether the user of levodopa considers important that some guidance be done about drug and data related the user's knowledge about the antiparkinsonian medication. Study was approved by Ethics Committee of Hospital das Clínicas de Ribeirão Preto School of Medicine of Ribeirão Preto (USP) (HCRP in 10078/2009). **Results:** The data indicated that 58% of patients did not receive counseling about drug therapy with levodopa, and the majority of participants (72.3%) considered this guidance important to increase the reliability, safety and effectiveness of therapy, minimize side effects and drug interactions. We found that 59 patients (52.7%) had no adherence to therapy (score <3), 58 (51.8%) reported not taking medication at the correct time and 36 (32.1%) already forgot to take their medication. **Conclusion:** Patients should be counseled about the importance of ingesting their medication on time, understanding the benefits that medication adherence can provide, being aware that doses not taken, taken in excess, or at different times of the prescription can decrease their response to treatment, negatively affecting clinical outcome and quality of life, generating higher costs to public health in the country.

Keywords: Parkinson Disease; Medication Adherence; Levodopa

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