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Systematic Review of Venous Thromboembolism Risk in Antipsychotics-exposed Patients

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Many studies suggest an association between the use of antipsychotic medicines (APs) and occurrence of venous thromboembolism (VTE). Thromboembolism is often associated with a significant risk of disability or death, and also plays a role in significantly increasing treatment costs. Despite many years of research on the association between the use of APs and VTE, specific pathogenetic mechanisms have not been identified. In the present study we searched available electronic medical databases (MEDLINE, PubMed, EMBASE) using a comprehensive search strategy. All steps were performed by at least 2 analysts in compliance with current Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions. The primary outcome measure of this systematic review was the occurrence of VTE (both DVT and/or PE) in patients exposed to AP drugs. Based on the identified reports it has been determined that the main risk factors for VTE are duration of treatment and patient-related factors, such as gender, age, body mass or physical activity. Current data does not allow identifying prothrombotic potential for individual APs. All patients treated with APs should be assessed with regard to the risk of thromboembolic complications and, if needed, appropriate prevention methods (most of all including elimination of modifiable risk factors) should be implemented. Moreover, patients should be educated about symptoms suggesting VTE. Each patient with suspected VTE should be diagnosed and treated immediately.