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NIACIN SENSITIVITY IN PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA-SPECTRUM DISORDERS, THEIR 1<sup>ST</sup> DEGREE RELATIVES AND HEALTHY CONTROLS

M. Schloegelhofer<sup>1</sup>, N. Mossaheb<sup>2</sup>, R. Kaufmann<sup>1</sup>, T. Aninilkumparambil<sup>1</sup>, A. Gold<sup>1</sup>, C. Himmelbauer<sup>1</sup>, S. Inreiter<sup>1</sup>, L. Schlehaider<sup>1</sup>, H. Aschauer<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, <sup>2</sup>Department of Child- and Adolescent Psychiatry, Medical University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria

Introduction: Schizophrenia has often been associated with a reduced skin flush response to niacin. Blunted response suggests potential disturbance in phospholipid metabolism.

Objectives: We performed niacin skin tests in patients with schizophrenia, their first-degree relatives and healthy controls.

Aims: To examine possible differences in skin flush response to niacin.

Methods: We examined 51 patients (female 49%, age 33.1 years, SD 11), with schizophrenia-spectrum disorders, 51 matched healthy controls (female 49%, age 33 years, SD 12.1), and 21 first-degree relatives (female 61,9%, age 49,5 years, SD 17,6, one affected, others non-affected). The Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale and the Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview were used to assess psychopathology and diagnosis, respectively. The non-invasive niacin skin flush test was used to assess vasodilatative reaction to four different concentrations of niacin on the forearms of subjects.

Results: We found no differences in total scores on the niacin skin flush test between the three groups ( $p=0.774$ ). Mean scores were 60.27 (SD 14.2) in healthy controls, 58.84 (SD 10.2) in patients and 58.48 (SD 9.4) in first-degree relatives.

Conclusion: Contrary to our expectations we did not find a significantly blunted niacin skin flush reaction in patients with schizophrenia-spectrum disorders compared to healthy controls or 1<sup>st</sup> degree relatives.