

THE LETHAL POTENTIAL OF LAMOTRIGINE - DRESS SYNDROME

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Introduction: The Drug Reaction with Eosinophilia and Systemic Symptom (DRESS) is a severe adverse drug-induced reaction of delayed onset. It is characterized by a severe skin eruption, fever, hematologic abnormalities, and internal organ involvement, potentially life-threatening. Its incidence ranges from 1 in 1000 to 1 in 10,000 drug exposures. More than 50 drugs have been reported to induce DRESS, however anticonvulsants account for one third of the drugs causing DRESS.

Objective: To highlight to the knowledge of potential adverse effects of psychiatric drugs.

Methods: To describe and discuss a case report of DRESS Syndrome induced by Lamotrigine in a patient with bipolar disorder, using medline database.

Results: The pathogenesis of DRESS syndrome is not fully understood. However, its death rate is up to 10%, what makes its recognition very important. From all the drugs that can cause DRESS, lamotrigine, used in psychiatry as mood stabilizer, is the second principal drug related to it, next to carbamazepine.

Conclusion: Although, this syndrome is mainly managed in non-psychiatric units, a psychiatrist must know the potential reactions to the drugs he uses. The psychiatrist must be able to warn the patient and to suspect of this clinical identity, in order to a quicker and better managing of these cases. This subject is an example how psychiatry and medicine are linked and how important is a multidisciplinary approach of a psychiatric patient.