

### Efficacy of Lamotrigine in the Treatment of Bipolar Depression

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**Introduction:** Depressive episodes are common in bipolar illness. Treatment of bipolar depression is often problematic because standard antidepressants carry a number of disadvantages: apparent lower efficacy than in unipolar depression; risk of inducing mania; risk of inducing rapid cycling. Anticonvulsants such as carbamazepine, valproate and lamotrigine are useful in the management of bipolar disorder and they can prevent episodes of depression. There is less evidence that they have antidepressant efficacy but lamotrigine was shown to produce antidepressant effects in a placebo-controlled trial in bipolar depressed patients. Lamotrigine has a role in acute management of bipolar depression and is probably free of a risk of inducing mania or rapid cycling. **Objectives:** To determine the efficacy of lamotrigine in treatment of patients with bipolar depression.

**Aims:** Investigation of lamotrigine efficacy with bipolar depression in 3 month-follow-up and 6 months follow-up treatment with lamotrigine.

**Methods:** The sample consisted of 30 patients with bipolar depression, age range between 26 and 58. All subjects received monotherapy with lamotrigine in the period of six months. Subjects were assessed prior to therapy and in 3 and 6 months follow-up using the following instruments: The Clinical Global Impressions scale (CGI), and Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HAM-D-21).

**Results:** The difference between three assessments on CGI was statistically significant. The results indicate statistically significant reduction of depression on HAMD-21 following six months treatment with lamotrigine.

**Conclusions:** Lamotrigine proved to be efficient in the treatment of patients with bipolar depression for the subjects in this study.

Key words: Lamotrigine, bipolar depression

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