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PATIENTS' ATTITUDES TO ANTIPSYCHOTIC DEPOT MEDICATION

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Introduction: The advantages of conventional depots (CDs) in treating schizophrenia have been demonstrated in several studies. Indeed, the use of CDs continues to have a great importance in our psychiatric sectors due to the unavailability of atypical depot formulations.

Objective: The aim of this work was to assess the perspectives of patients with schizophrenia towards CDs.

Methods: We conducted a cross-sectional survey using fifty schizophrenic/schizoaffective outpatients treated by CDs for at least 3 months. The questionnaire included sociodemographic data, data concerning the disease and perspectives of CDs.

Results: 80% of the patients were males. The mean age was 30.7 years. 40% were married and 70% unemployed.

76% were diagnosed as schizophrenic patients (58% undifferentiated, 18% disorganized) and 24% as schizoaffective patients. The average duration of the disease was 15.5 years.

The time of the last hospitalization went back to 10.1 years on average.

For all the patients, the initiative of CDs' prescription was taken by the psychiatrist by reason of the poor adherence (72%) and the inefficiency of the previous treatment (38%).

80% of the patients preferred CDs to oral neuroleptics because the former:

- allowed avoidance of oblivion (70%),
- were more effective (60%),
- made relapses less frequent (50%),
- ensured distant intakes of treatment (50%),
- were better tolerated (40%),
- improved patient's autonomy (32.5%).

Conclusion: The patients in our study have high regard for CDs, which explains their adherence success.

Their autonomy and their tolerance of neuroleptics might be improved by using atypical depot formulations.