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Combination of brexpiprazole and aripiprazole, long-acting injectable therapy for treatment-resistant schizophrenia

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Schizophrenia has a prevalence rate of 1% and is a complicated illness that often leads to periods of relapses. Up to a third of patients with schizophrenia are considered to be treatment-resistant. Despite the new and various antipsychotic medications that have recently come to market, the number of treatment-resistant cases continues to abound. This has led to a sub-population of patients with schizophrenia being treated with more than one antipsychotic medication concurrently. Though it has become more common in clinical practice, there is sparse literature to objectively support the combination use of antipsychotic medications. There is also little literature addressing the use of a long-acting injectable (LAI) used in combination with another atypical antipsychotic. This case report serves to highlight the concurrent use of aripiprazole LAI used in combination with oral brexpiprazole in two patients with treatment-resistant schizophrenia. The receptor binding affinity of these two antipsychotics appears complementary and perhaps even protective for extra pyramidal symptoms (EPS). We hypothesize that the use of a LAI serves as a “foundational barrier” to mitigate the potential for full psychotic relapses that patients become noncompliant with their oral medications, and that the LAI also may help with oral medication compliance in this subpopulation of treatment-resistant schizophrenia patients by increasing baseline functionality.

Biography

Mathew Nguyen, MD, MBA is board certified in Adult Psychiatry and Child/Adolescent Psychiatry. He recently retired from faculty at the University of Florida, where during his 15 years, he oversaw multiple divisions, including Child/Adolescent Psychiatry, Consultation/Liaison, Medical Psychology, and Eating Disorders. He currently runs an Adult Psychiatry Inpatient Unit at Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. in Gainesville, Florida. He continues to be involved in clinical research, lecturing, and publishing. He also recently graduated from the University of Florida with a Master's in Business Administration and plans to incorporate the MBA into improving patient care models.

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