COMPARISONS OF THE EFFICACY OF MIRTAZAPINE AND BUPROPION IN THE TREATMENT OF DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS IN PATIENTS WITH ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE

P. H. Chou, P. T. Lin and C. H. Chan
Department of Psychiatry, Taichung Veterans General Hospital, Taiwan

Background. Patients with alcohol problems are frequently comorbid with depression or anxiety. Treatment of these comorbidities may help to prevent alcohol reuse. This study was designed to assess the efficacy of mirtazapine and bupropion in depression, anxiety, global function, obsessive and compulsive drinking behavior, the amount of anxiolytic/hypnotics use, and sober condition in patients with alcohol dependence.

Method. A total of 42 subjects (21 patients in each group) are enrolled in this study after detoxification stage for 7 days. The total treatment period was 12 week. Assessments including HAM-D, HAM-A, obsessive and compulsive drinking behavior scale, GAS and Sober condition were performed before in the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 8th and 12th weeks of treatment.

Results. It showed that the clinical rating scales including HAM-D, HAM-A, Obsessive and compulsive drinking behavior scale, GAS and Sober condition significantly improved in the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 8th and 12th weeks. In addition, there were no significant differences between mirtazapine and bupropion with regard to the clinical rating scales.

Conclusions. Treatment of comorbid depression and anxiety with mirtazapine and bupropion seemed to be beneficial in the treatment of alcohol dependence. However, the results should be interpreted with caution due to the lack of control group.