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Psychotropic drugs in primary care

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Aim: To determine the frequency of visits for mental disease and profile of use of psychotropic drugs in our environment.

Methodology: Design: Descriptive study. Location: Two health centers in primary care. Participants: All patients attending 5 Primary Care consultations in 23 randomly selected days in a three month period. Measurements: The number of consultations for mental disease. Patients taking psychotropic drugs, reason for the indication, drug class, treatment duration, prescribing physician.

Results: 1595 consultations were attended, of which 93 (5.8%) consulted for mental disorders: 42% for anxiety, 31.2% for depression and 20.4% for insomnia. 368 people (23%) are being treated with psychotropic drugs; mean age 65, 71.4% women. Reason for prescription: insomnia 36%, 28.5% for depression, 24.5% for anxiety. 76.5% prescribed by the family doctor, psychiatrist 14%, 9.5% by another specialist. 20.4% of the patients seen in consultation for any reason taking benzodiazepines or hypnotics, antidepressants 11%, being 6.6% with SSRIs. 69% of the patients treated with psychotropic drugs take one psychotropic drug, 26% two and 4.3% three. 60% have taken antidepressants for more than two years. 76% have taken anxiolytics for more than a year now. in addition to the psychotropic drug, 47.7% is polymedicated with more than 5 drugs.

Conclusions: The use of psychotropic drugs in our environment is within the average collected in the literature. Insomnia is the most frequent reason for taking psychotropic drugs. Benzodiazepines are the most prescribed and used for a long time, exceeding the recommendations of clinical practice guidelines psychotropic drugs. Predominance of women in the use of psychoactive drugs.