

Benzhixol Abuse In Hilla Province

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Summary

This study included 190 benzhexol abusers in Babylon province. It was found that 96.4% were male, 98% haven't finished their primary or secondary school, 25.3% played traunt, 69.5% either without a job or running unskilled job's. 51.5% have history of imprisonment for various reasons. The abusers used parkizol for its calming, euphoriant effects. The main diagnostic category of the abusers was emotionally unstable personality disorder.

Introduction

The problem of drugs abuse is the most complex one, as it is affected by many factors (Sociocultural, Political and Medical). Drugs abuse and addiction have been growing up to an epidemic in many countries e.g. America, Parts of Europe and Asia⁽¹⁾.

Abuse is a rapidly growing monster which can destruct people and societies. For centuries belladonna alkaloids were known to have

sedative action can induce delirium and euphoria like states, so for these reasons it is likely to be abused.

The synthetic analogue of belladonna, the anticholinergic which is now widely used is the Benzhexol (B.H), thrihexyphenidyl or under the trade names parkizol or Artane, as an antiparkinsonian agent and for the treatment of extrapyramidal symptoms of the psychotropic drugs.

Although B.H is widely prescribed, reports or publications about it is abuse or addictive properties are little and many of them are case reports. e.g. B.H has euphoriant and anxiolytic effects by Kaminer 1982⁽²⁾, Bolin 1960⁽³⁾, Daniel 1979⁽⁴⁾, Harrison 1980⁽⁵⁾.

Rouchell and Dixon reported that B.H cause Hallucination and delerium in high doses⁽⁶⁾.

Crawshaw and P.Mullen in 1984 reported 21 cases with B.H abuse

as euphoriant with two major diagnosis of the abusers (antisocial personality and schizophrenia)⁽⁷⁾.

A study by putamianose in 1982 showed that B.H impair memory storage and leering of new material in the elderly⁽⁸⁾.

It is well recognized the association of anticholenergic with the onset of tradive dyskinesia (Tamming and Thaker 1989)⁽⁹⁾.

It is a common observation probably by all the psychiatrists, many physicians, pharmacists and those in contact with prisoners of the increasing number of those who insist on obtaining the B.H specially by the young age groups, the prison inmates and many of those in the army.

They took B.H which preferred upon alcohol by them B.H is cheaper, easily obtainable, no social or medical restriction about it is use and it is free of the of the alcohol. This study was carried out to shed a light on the problem of B.H abuse among Iraqi population in Babylon province.

Patients and Methods

190 cases of B.H abuse. 18 of them prisoners from Hilla main prison. 7 out of 172 were female All cases were interviewed and followed up personally. The data were collected from Merjan teaching hospital out patient and from private clinics.

Information were recorded about, age, sex, marital, occupational status, residency, educational achievement, psychiatric, forensic and family histories, presence of polydrug abuse, the year of the onset of the abuse, precipitating events, mental states, dose, frequency, clinical, unwanted effects psychological or physical and the source of the B.H supply.

Results

All our cases were male 96.4% except 7 who were female house wives.

The youngest age was 17 years, the eldest 57 years old. The mean age was 29.5 years [standard deviation 13.7]. Mode 29 years (Fig.1).

Frequency distribution of cases abusing benzhexol (parkizol) by age in Babylon province

age interval (years)	No.	%
Below 20	14	7.4
21-30	107	65.3
31-40	56	29.4
41-50	11	5.8
Above 51	2	1.1
Total	190	100%

133 were unmarried or single (70%).

82 of them have dead father, 28 dead mother (60%).

149 from the center of city (crowded, low status provinces) i.e. 78.4%.

40 were still running their army service.

132 either without a job or running unskilled interrupted jobs. (96.5%). Fig (2) .

Frequency distribution of cases abusing benzhexol by occupations

Occupation	No.	%
Armyservice	40	21.1
Without job or unskilled job	132	69.4
Official work	8	4.2
Others	10	5.3
Total	190	100%

187 haven't finished their primary or secondary school level (98%) only two have college qualifications. 48 played traunt (23.5%).

In their forensic history 97 have

history of imprisonment for various reasons (51.1%). Out of the 97 (26 due to quarell and assualts, 11 due to murder, 4 rape, 19 thefts and 38 due to army absences). (Fig.3).

Frequency distribution of cases abusing parkizol by types of offences

Types of offences	No.	%
Quarells & attempted murder	25	25.8
Murder	11	11.3
Pape	4	4.1
Theft	19	19.6
Army absences	38	39.2
Total	96	100%

66 of the abusers have history of hospital admissions (34.7%), 37 for psychiatric reasons and 29 for war and other traumas.

55 cases have marks of self slashing on various parts of their bodies (29%).

Regarding polydrug abuse there was a history of alcohol, Revortil, Valium, Mogadon, Somadril abuse when they were available few years ago, currently rarely abused because they are almost absent from the drugsmarket, except alcohol which is still abused by few patients.

they years of the B.H abuse were as followed:-

From

1977 1981 11 cases
 1982 1986 12 cases
 1987 1991 60 cases
 1992 1996 84 cases

We can see the increasing numbers of the abusers over years. 96 cases started their habit when they were in the army .

Nearly all the cases reported significant psychological or physical traumas as a precipitating factors which disturbed their mental states. They started to suffer from nervous tension, changeable mood, reacting with outbursts of anger, violence, aggression to minimal criticism or negative interaction with others specially at home with their family members, easily provoked, intolerant to any conversation, they become violent, destructive, smashing furnitures, plates, glasses, battering their wives, children and even at times harm and slash themselves.

They reported disturbed sleep, appetite, with depressed mood, lacked the energy and desire to work

or mix with people. All the above symptoms improved or controlled by the regular use of B.H which is according to the abusers give them energy and desire to work, confidence, sense of well being (euphoria), can tolerate people, family members and their critics.

The range of the dose of B.H is wide, related to the individual variations. As the abusers from 1/4 to 3-4 tablets of 5 mg daily in one dose or in divided doses or according to their state of mind, they use it on need once daily or more.

Those who were abusing alcohol shifted their habit to the B.H which they found it superior to alcohol.

No tolerance to B.H were recorded as found every case stuck to his own dose and its frequency that keeps him calm.

No gross physical withdrawal symptoms were recorded. However the psychological symptoms which followed the absence of the B.H were the same symptoms mentioned earlier for which B.H were abused.

It is worth to mention that one patient who was college graduated found B.H as the only drug which controlled his anxiety and obsession after the use of near available drugs including the clomipramine in adequate doses.

Discussion

The group of B.H abusers we have studied represent people in their active and productive stage of life. They showed failures on many social variables, around 70% of them with single status and again 70% unemployed. Nearly all of them they failed to finish the primary or secondary schools, many played trauants, 50% have history of imprisonment, death of the father or mother in around 60% of the cases may be a factor in disturbing the integrity of their social network so added to their difficulties. Nearly all of them were emotionally unstable, easily provoked, intolerant to criticism, acts violently against themselves and others, there were only 3 schizophrenics and one with anxiety & obsession. Almost all of the abusers reported significant traumatic life events which rendered them emotionally unstable. The abusers reported that they have tried all the

available antidepressants, minor and major tranquilisers and many other drugs when available like revotril, somadril e.t.c. Many of them also tried alcohol. However found B.H superior in action to all the above drugs and even superior to alcohol in giving them the tranquility, euphoria, clamness, energy, motive, desire to work with high tolerance to the critics from others.

In our sample it was interesting to find that the B.H abusers rarely abuse other drugs and they even substitute alcohol by B.H, as according to them B.H is cheaper, easily obtainable free of odor and without the religious, so e-strictions imposed on alcohol and can be carried in their pockets easily every where.

B.H widely abused by prisoners, soldiers and it is spreading rapidly between young people introduced to them by their friends when they feel miserable or angry and so in this way the habits started.

The intake of the B.H is by oral way only, either daily in divided doses from 2mg to 20mg, or on need when they feel angry, depresses to tired.

The action on their psychic state started with in 15-30 minutes and may last from 8-24 hours or more.

No reported cases of parentral use. No reported cases of B.H delerium and no gross memory deficit (Potamianos 1982)⁽⁸⁾. No cases of pseudo-obstruction of the colon [Glynn, Harrison 1980]⁽⁵⁾.

We have no reports of toxic psychosis in our sample f B.H abusers [Bolin 1960]⁽³⁾.

Conclusion

The extent of benzhexol abuse is still probably not well known. The aim of this study is to draw attention to its existence.

Polydrug abusers as a group need to be denitrified, educated about the draggers of their habit. Lax or free prescription of benzhexol need to be avoided in particular to the young with the potential to abuse the drug.

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هل الباركزول دواء او وباء؟

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الخلاصة

ولاسباب متباينة وظهر أن السبب الرئيسي لاستعمالهم الباركزول هو الشعور بالهدوء، والثقة بالنفس وتحسن المزاج والقدرة والرغبة على العمل والسيطرة على الانفعالات وكذلك لرخص ثمنه وتوفره كبديل عن الكحول والمواد المخدرة الأخرى. وكان التشخيص النفسي لهؤلاء هو اضطراب الشخصية .

تمت دراسة ١٩٠ حالة إدمان على عقار الباركزول أو آرتين (البنزهيكسول) في محافظة بابل . حيث وجد أن ٩٦,٤ ٪ منهم من الرجال . وان ٩٨ ٪ منهم لم يكملوا الدراسة الابتدائية أو الثانوية و ٢٥,٣ ٪ كانت لديهم عادة الهروب من المدرسة . ٦٩,٥ ٪ كانوا بدون عمل أو يعملون في أعمال غير ماهرة. ٥١,٥ ٪ منهم كانوا نزلاء سجون