

Dalaal A.F.

THE ROLE OF KETAMINE IN REVOLUTIONIZING OCD TREATMENT

Tutor: PhD, associate professor Volchek A.V.

Department of Pharmacology

Belarusian State Medical University, Minsk

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a chronic and often debilitating mental health condition characterized by the presence of intrusive thoughts (obsessions) and repetitive behaviors or mental acts (compulsions) aimed at alleviating the distress caused by these obsessions.

Various pharmacological agents in treating OCD, focusing primarily on Selective Serotonin Reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and Clomipramine, a tricyclic antidepressant.

This report focuses on Ketamine, originally developed as an anesthetic, has gained attention in recent years for its potential therapeutic effects in treating various mental health conditions, including depressions and OCD. It is not a traditional hallucinogen like psilocybin (magic mushroom) or LSD (Lysergic acid diethylamide), Ketamine does have dissociative properties and can induce altered states of consciousness.

Ketamine primarily acts on NMDA receptor antagonist, which influences glutamate levels in the brain. By blocking Glutamate receptors, ketamine reduces the excitatory

neurotransmission that can contribute to mood disorders. This action is thought to contribute to its rapid antidepressant effects and may also play a role in alleviating OCD symptoms.

Some studies have shown that Ketamine infusion can lead to rapid reduction in OCD symptoms. These effects may be temporary, often lasting days to weeks, which raises questions about long-term efficacy and the need for repeated treatments.

According to research done by a Stanford psychiatrist on the effects of Ketamine on the brains of patients with obsessive compulsive disorder, an infusion of Ketamine was done to a 24-year-old woman who had spent eight hours a day checking and rechecking that objects were precisely in place due to her obsession with symmetry and exactness.

Midway through the 40-minute Ketamine infusion, the patient said all obsessive thoughts and urges suddenly disappeared. She also said in about 20 minutes into the infusion, that she felt like a weight been lifted and as if was in a vacation from her OCD.

A Clinical trial with 15 OCD patients showed that Ketamine caused immediate reductions in symptoms during the infusion, and half of the patients had lasting relief for a week.

Ketamine given through intravenous infusion, intranasal spray. While many patients tolerate Ketamine well, potential side effects include dissociation, dizziness, nausea and increased blood pressure.

Some practitioners advocate combining Ketamine treatment with cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) or other therapeutic modalities to enhance treatment outcomes. To be considered that according to researches Ketamine is generally considered when traditional OCD treatments (like SSRIs or CBT) have failed.

Ketamine may help patients who do not respond to traditional treatments of OCD and has a fast effect which can help those with severe symptoms. It is universally not “better” than SSRIs and CBT and since each patient’s situation is unique and treatment should be tailored to individual needs, preferences and response to therapy.