



Anticholinergic drug use and its association with self-reported symptoms among older persons with and without diabetes.

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Abstract:

Anticholinergic drug use has been associated with a risk of central and peripheral adverse effects. There is a lack of information on anticholinergic drug use in persons with diabetes. The aim of this study is to investigate anticholinergic drug use and the association between anticholinergic drug use and self-reported symptoms in older community-dwelling persons with and without diabetes.

The basic population was comprised of Finnish community-dwelling primary care patients aged 65 and older. Persons with diabetes were identified according to the ICD-10 diagnostic codes from electronic patient records. Two controls adjusted by age and gender were selected for each person with diabetes. This cross-sectional study was based on electronic primary care patient records and a structured health questionnaire. The health questionnaire was returned by 430 (81.6%) persons with diabetes and 654 (73.5%) persons without diabetes. Data on prescribed drugs were obtained from the electronic patient records. Anticholinergic drug use was measured according to the Anticholinergic Risk Scale. The presence and strength of anticholinergic symptoms were asked in the health questionnaire.

The prevalence of anticholinergic drug use was 8.9% in the total study cohort. There were no significant differences in anticholinergic drug use between persons with and without diabetes. There was no consistent association between anticholinergic drug use and self-reported symptoms.

There is no difference in anticholinergic drug use in older community-dwelling persons with and without diabetes. Anticholinergic drug use should be considered individually and monitored carefully.

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