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Moxifloxacin-induced acute psychosis: A case report

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Objective: Fluoroquinolones, in general, and moxifloxacin, in particular, are used to treat a variety of bacterial infections; overall, they have a good safety profile and they are well tolerated. Our aim is to describe the case of a healthy female treated with moxifloxacin, who, after a single dose, developed acute psychosis.

Methods: A 42-year-old woman visited Mental Health Center of Rethymno; the day before she has developed agitation, insomnia, visual and auditory hallucinations, and delusional thoughts of persecutory type. A clinical interview and a referral for laboratory tests and MRI were performed.

Results: During the clinical interview no previous psychiatric or/and drug abuse history emerged. Her physical examination was good, the laboratory tests were normal and the MRI confirmed that there was no structural damage. What emerged, though, was that the woman developed the acute psychosis after a single dose of moxifloxacin prescribed for the treatment of urinary tract infection. Therefore, a diagnosis of moxifloxacin-induced acute psychotic episode was suspected; actually, after the discontinuation of the therapy, the woman was free of all psychiatric symptoms.

Conclusion: Taking into consideration the extensive use of third generation quinolones for the treatment of common bacterial infections, this case report points out a rare, however, serious side effect of a commonly used drug. The prevention of misdiagnosis of a psychiatric disorder, but also, the caution of patients with a potential risk factor for susceptibility to such adverse side effects are, indeed, imperative in clinical practice.