

LONG-TERM USE OF BENZODIAZEPINES IN OLDER PATIENTS IN GERMANY: A RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

Authors: Jacob L, Rapp MA, Kostev K

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this study was to analyze the prevalence of long-term benzodiazepine use in older adults treated in general and neuropsychiatric practices in Germany.

METHODS

This study included 32,182 patients over the age of 65 years who received benzodiazepine prescriptions for the first time between January 2010 and December 2014 in general and neuropsychiatric practices in Germany. Follow up lasted until July 2016. The main outcome measure was the proportion of patients treated with benzodiazepines for >6 months.

RESULTS

The proportion of patients with benzodiazepine therapy for >6 months increased with age (65-70 years: 12.3%; 71-80 years: 15.5%; 81-90 years: 23.7%; >90 years: 31.6%) but did not differ significantly between men (15.5%) and women (17.1%). The proportion of patients who received benzodiazepines for >6 months was higher among those with sleep disorders (21.1%), depression (20.8%) and dementia (32.1%) than among those with

anxiety (15.5%). By contrast, this proportion was lower among people diagnosed with adjustment disorders (7.7%) and back pain (3.8%).

CONCLUSION

Overall, long-term use of benzodiazepines is common in older people, particularly in patients over the age of 80 and in those diagnosed with dementia, sleep disorders, or depression.

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Thank you for your interest!