Cureus

Analgesics and their Administration to Older Patients in Hospital During the COVID -19 Pandemic

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Categories: Pain Management, Other, Palliative Care
Keywords: analgesics, older patients, c0vid -19

How to cite this abstract
Fatyga E, Muc-Wierzgoń M, Kokot T, et al. (August 05, 2021) Analgesics and their Administration to Older Patients in Hospital During the COVID -19 Pandemic. Cureus 13(8): a612

Abstract

Older individuals form a special group of patients who experience chronic pain. Pain among individuals of this age group most often concerns the joints of the lower extremities, the sacro-lumbar region, and lesions of the peripheral nervous system. Pain relief treatment in older patients, due to multiple morbidity, increases the risk of adverse drug interactions.

Aim of the study: Analyzing the analgesics used by a group of patients over the age of 60 while being hospitalized at a department of internal medicine in southern Poland during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Material and Method: The study group consisted of 100 people (61 women and 39 men) aged 60+ hospitalized in the internal ward of the Silesian Voivodeship hospital. This study uses an anonymous questionnaire written by the author for the specific purpose of this work, as well as the NRS pain intensity scale.

Results: In the group of patients at the above mentioned department of internal medicine, non-opioid analgesics (paracetamol) were the most frequently used in the case of low intensity pain (up to 3-4 on the NRS scale). For moderate pain (NRS 4-6), tramadol was the drug of choice. Pregabalin and antidepressants, especially from the group of selective serotonin and noradrenaline reuptake inhibitors, have been used in the treatment of localized neuropathic pain. NSAIDs have only occasionally been used for inflammation.

Conclusions: For the pain relief treatment of older patients hospitalized in the department of internal medicine during the COVID-19 pandemic, gradual pain relief was obtained. The choice of painkillers for older patients was adjusted individually, the duration of therapy was limited to the necessary minimum, and the lowest effective doses of drugs were administered.

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Abstract
Published 08/05/2021

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