

# LACK OF ISO-APPEARANCE IN DISPENSED ANTIPSYCHOTICS IN PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

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## Background

The main factor involved in the stability and improvement of patients with schizophrenia is adherence to antipsychotic treatment. Disease related factors, patient related factors, environmental factors and treatment related factors have all been related to non-adherence. In this sense, several studies have shown that changes in the aspect of a pharmaceutical drug (lack of iso-appearance) can lead to poorer adherence in chronic diseases. In the context of schizophrenia, the prevalence of lack of iso-appearance in prescribed antipsychotics has been scantily studied.

## Purpose

To measure the proportion of patients affected by lack of iso-appearance in dispensed antipsychotics.

## Method

To conduct this study, we linked information from different administrative healthcare databases from The Basque Country. We obtained data about patients with a diagnostic code of schizophrenia (F20\*) as by ICD-10 attended in any of the public mental healthcare networks from the 2/06/2016 to 2/06/2017. Patients admitted to any acute care hospital during the study period were discarded.

We measured the number of different brands of each antipsychotic dispensed to patients during the study period. We also calculated the proportion of patients that were affected by this issue globally and within each individual antipsychotic.

## Results

We identified 4,810 different patients with schizophrenia during the study period. Different brands of a same antipsychotic were dispensed to 8.5% of patients (409/4,810). Quetiapine was the most frequently implicated drug, followed by ziprasidone and olanzapine. In the 409 affected patients, the mean number of different antipsychotic brands dispensed per patient was 1.73.

## Conclusions

As far as we are aware, our study is the first one to systematically measure lack of iso-appearance of prescribed antipsychotics in a large population of schizophrenic patients. The proportion of patients to whom different brands of the same antipsychotics were dispensed was lower than expected, with only 8.5% of the patients undergoing this problem. Interestingly, different brands were dispensed to almost a quarter of patients on quetiapine.

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