COMPARISON OF CAPSAICINE PATCH 8% MONOTHERAPY AND ITS COMBINATION WITH PREGABALIN IN POSTHERPETIC NEURALGIA TREATMENT

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Postherpetic neuralgia is one of the commonest neuropathic pain situations, that causes patients apart from severe pain and discomfort, usual absence from work. In the past, many drugs and their combinations have been used in its treatment.

Aim of this study is the comparison of capsaicine patch 8% monotherapy and its combination with pregabalin, in such cases.

37 patients (7 male, 30 female), presented to pain clinic for persistent postherpetic neuralgia, after they had completed antiviral therapy and rash had disappeared, were randomly assigned to two groups (Group A: 24 and Group B: 13). Group A patients were administered just capsaicine patch 8%, while Group B patients, apart from capsaicine patch application, received pregabalin 100 – 450mg per os according to their age, weight and pain intensity for a three months period. Demographic data were comparable between two groups' patients. Pain scores were recorded 7, 15, 30 and 90 days after treatment beginning. Both groups' patients side-effects were recorded.

No significant difference was observed 7 and 15 days ($0,32\pm0,07$, $0,30\pm0,06$ – day 7, $0,34\pm0,1$, $0,29\pm0,1$ – day 15, respectively) between two groups' patients, which expressed very low pain scores, while pain scores were low, but significantly higher in group A patients one and three months later ($0,3\pm0,02$, $0,16\pm0,04$ – 1 month, $0,28\pm0,07$, $0,08\pm0,007$ – 3 months later, respectively). Two group A and one group B patients removed patch, because of excessive burn and erythema, while one group B patients discontinued pregabalin.

Capsaicine patch 8% monotherapy appears effective on the first two weeks after application, but its combination with pregabalin seems more effective later on. Further studies are needed to support these findings.