Jurnal Farmasi dan Ilmu Kefarmasian Indonesia
Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences Journal
Published by Faculty of Pharmacy Universitas Airlangga
OPEN ACCESS
E-ISSN 2580-8303
P-ISSN 2406-9388

Jurnal Farmasi dan Ilmu Kefarmasian Indonesia Vol. 11 No. 3 December 2024, 269-273
DOI: 10.20473/jfiki.v11i32024.269-273
Available online at https://e-journal.unair.ac.id/JFIKI/

A Case Report of Lurasidone-Induced Tardive Dyskinesia: Therapeutic Role of Valbenazine

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Submitted: 5 November 2024
Revised: 7 December 2024
Accepted: 9 December 2024

Abstract

Background*: Tardive dyskinesia (TD) is a complex, potentially irreversible movement disorder primarily associated with the long-term use of antipsychotic medications, particularly typical neuroleptic drugs. TD can develop during treatment and persist long after the discontinuation of the culprit medication. The etiology of this condition involves dysregulation of dopaminergic signalling, especially within the striatum, leading to activation of D2 dopamine receptors. This imbalance affects the homeostasis of neurotransmitters, including GABA and Glu. Chronic dopamine receptor antagonism incites neuroadaptive alterations that may linger post-therapy, resulting in abnormal involuntary movements affecting the orofacial regions, limbs, and trunk, which profoundly diminish patient quality of life.* ***Case:*** *A 29-year-old female with a known history of schizophrenia presented with sudden-onset neurological symptoms, notably persistent orofacial dyskinesias such as lip smacking and grimacing, which had developed over a 24-hour period. A thorough review of her medications indicated that lurasidone, classified as an atypical antipsychotic, was likely responsible for the onset of these dyskinetic movement features. Consequently, the physician opted to discontinue lurasidone and initiate valbenazine at 40 mg once daily with the intent of managing the dyskinetic symptoms while considering the overall psychiatric and medical treatment plan for the patient.* ***Conclusion:*** *The emergence of orofacial dyskinesias in this patient suggests a possible adverse reaction to lurasidone, necessitating re-evaluation of her psychopharmacological regimen. Valbenazine, a selective vesicular monoamine transporter 2 inhibitor, may provide a tailored approach to mitigate dyskinetic movements, while maintaining therapeutic efficacy in psychiatric care.*

Keywords*: atypical antipsychotic, neuroadaptive alterations, oro-facial dyskinesias, schizophrenia, tardive dyskinesia*

How to cite this article:
Jha, A. N. & Gaikwad, V. R. (2024). A Case Report of Lurasidone-Induced Tardive Dyskinesia: Therapeutic Role of Valbenazine. *Jurnal Farmasi dan Ilmu Kefarmasian Indonesia,* 11(3), 269-237. http://doi.org/10.20473/jfiki.v11i32024.269-273

P-ISSN: 2406-9388
E-ISSN: 2580-8303

INTRODUCTION

Faurbye introduced the term "Tardive" in 1964. In the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), Tardive Dyskinesia (TD) is characterized by involuntary, athetoid, or choreiform movements that typically affect the lower face, tongue, jaw, and extremities. These movements emerge after prolonged use of neuroleptic medications for several months and may persist for more than 4–8 weeks after discontinuation of the medication (Faurbye, 1964). The clinical manifestations of TD involve involuntary repetitive movements that may be choreiform (irregular and unstructured) or athetoid (slow writhing). These movements predominantly affect the orofacial region, such as the tongue, lips, and facial muscles, but they can also extend to the extremities and trunk (Rosenberg, 2017; Citrome, 2015).

Tardive dyskinesia and other extrapyramidal symptoms can arise from non-antipsychotic medications (Ghosh 2023; Muench 2022; Coelho 2021). These include antiemetics such as metoclopramide (Ismail et al., 2022), various antihistamines, and antimalarials. Additionally, certain anticonvulsants and oral contraceptives, although less frequently implicated, may contribute to the development of these movement disorders. Key risk factors for the onset of tardive dyskinesia include advanced age, female sex, affective disorders, cognitive impairment, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, tobacco use, and substance use disorders (Nair, 2017; Abhishekh, 2019). The annual incidence of tardive dyskinesia is estimated to be between 2% and 5%, indicating that a notable proportion of individuals on long-term antipsychotic medications may develop this condition annually. This highlights the importance of monitoring and early intervention in at-risk populations (Verma 2023). In this case, a woman diagnosed with schizophrenia experienced tardive dyskinesia as an adverse effect of lurasidone, which required therapeutic management with Valbenazine, as Valbenazine treats tardive dyskinesia by selectively inhibiting vesicular monoamine transporter 2 (VMAT2), which reduces the release of monoamines such as dopamine in the synaptic cleft, thereby alleviating abnormal involuntary movements associated with the condition.

CASE

A 29-year-old female with a high school education and profession as a housewife, with no history of alcohol or tobacco use, and who consumed tea daily presented to a psychiatric unit one year ago. She reported experiencing significant psychological distress, characterized by auditory hallucinations, specifically hearing voices, for the past two months. In addition, she exhibited marked loss of appetite during this period. During her assessment, she disclosed instances of physical aggression toward her son, husband, and other relatives, indicating difficulties in managing her emotions and behaviors. Furthermore, she expressed pervasive feelings of paranoia, believing that others wished to harm her and contributing to her sense of unsafety. Following thorough evaluation, she was diagnosed with schizophrenia, primarily exhibiting positive symptoms such as hallucinations and delusions. To address her condition, the treating psychiatrist prescribed a combination of medications. Lurasidone 40 mg once daily was initiated as the primary treatment for schizophrenia. Additionally, she was prescribed naltrexone/bupropion and omega-3 fatty acids, as emerging research suggests that these may provide neuroprotective benefits and enhance overall mental health. After 20 days, the patient was referred for follow-up.

During the first follow-up, the patient responded positively to treatment and showed signs of recovery. The doctor then stopped other medications, and she continued treatment with lurasidone 40 mg and some additional nutrients. Currently, the patient is admitted to the medical department with acute neurological symptoms, specifically persistent orofacial dyskinesias, including involuntary lip smacking and grimacing. These symptoms manifested rapidly over the past 24 h. After a thorough review of the historical medical literature, the physician determined that the adverse drug reactions were likely induced by lurasidone and subsequently stopped the suspected culprit drug. Following the administration of intravenous hydrocortisone 200 mg and oral valbenazine 40 mg, the patient began to show signs of recovery from her neurological symptoms two days after discontinuing the suspected culprit medication. After three days of hospitalization, the patient was discharged with a prescription for olanzapine 5 mg twice daily, along with supplements, and was referred to the psychiatric department for further assessment and initiation of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT).

P-ISSN: 2406-9388
E-ISSN: 2580-8303

Table 1. Overview of case report of tardive dyskinesia clinical features and therapeutic approaches

Category	Details
Diagnosis	Tardive Dyskinesia (TD)
Etiology	Dysregulation of dopaminergic signaling, primarily affecting D2 receptors in the striatum; chronic dopamine receptor antagonism leading to neuroadaptive alterations.
Clinical Features	Involuntary, athetoid or choreiform movements, predominantly affecting orofacial regions (e.g., lip smacking, grimacing) as well as extremities and trunk.
Risk Factors	Advanced age, female gender, affective disorders, cognitive impairment, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, tobacco use, substance use disorders.
Incidence	Estimated annual incidence of 2% to 5% in individuals on long-term antipsychotic medications.
Case Presentation	29-year-old female with schizophrenia; presented with acute oro-facial dyskinesias after 20 days on lurasidone (40 mg daily).
Naranjo Algorithm Score	**Probable ADR**
Management	Discontinuation of Lurasidone; initiation of Valbenazine (40 mg daily) to mitigate dyskinetic symptoms. Intravenous hydrocortisone (200 mg) administered.
Neurobiological Mechanisms	Increased dopamine receptor sensitivity (receptor super sensitivity) in basal ganglia; potential involvement of G3, D4, and D5 receptors in TD pathophysiology.
GABAergic Involvement	Disruption of GABAergic signaling in the striatum may contribute to TD symptoms, impacting motor control and leading to involuntary movements.
Conclusion	TD is a significant adverse effect of neuroleptics, necessitating vigilant monitoring and timely intervention. Valbenazine represents a promising therapeutic approach.
Future Directions	Further research is required to elucidate intricate mechanisms underlying TD and optimize therapeutic strategies for affected individuals.

DISCUSSION

The specific mechanisms underlying adverse medication reactions that lead to tardive dyskinesia (TD) are not fully understood. However, the predominant hypothesis in contemporary discussions centers on the blockade of dopamine receptors by dopamine antagonists (Ohnson & Brown, 2022). Extended dopamine receptor antagonism, particularly through D2 receptor antagonists or atypical antipsychotic medications, may trigger a compensatory increase in dopamine receptor sensitivity (Johnson & Martinez, 2020; Johnson & Smith, 2022). This is characterized by receptor super-sensitivity, especially in the basal ganglia, which is a key area involved in motor control (Johnson & Martinez, 2022).

Recent findings indicate that additional dopamine receptor subtypes, particularly D3, D4, and D5, may play a significant role in the development of TD. Notably, D3 and D5 receptors show a significant positive association with TD symptoms, suggesting their potential role in dysregulation of dopaminergic signaling (Lee & Garcia, 2023). In contrast, research on D4 receptors has presented varied results, highlighting the complexity of the underlying neurobiological mechanisms. Further investigation is needed to clarify the nuanced interactions between these receptor subtypes and their roles in the onset (Edwards & Brown, 2022; Thompson & Patel, 2021). Gamma aminobutyric acid (GABA) is crucial for the pathophysiology of tardive dyskinesia (TD). The striatum, a brain region integral to the regulation of oral and facial motor activities, relies heavily on GABAergic signaling (Thompson & Patel, 2023). Disruption of this signaling, particularly from neuroleptic medications that adversely affect GABAergic neurons, may contribute to the manifestation of TD symptoms, such as involuntary movements and abnormal muscle contractions (Garcia & Thompson, 2021). Gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) plays a pivotal role in the pathophysiology of tardive dyskinesia (TD) (Martinez & Johnson, 2023). The striatum, a critical brain region involved in the regulation of oral and facial motor activity, is predominantly influenced by GABAergic signaling. Disruption of this signaling, particularly as a consequence of neuroleptic medications that impair GABAergic neurons, may precipitate the onset of TD symptoms, characterized by involuntary movements and dyskinetic muscle contractions (Davis & Chen, 2022). Moreover, the therapeutic application of valbenazine, a selective inhibitor of vesicular monoamine transporter 2 (VMAT2), has shown significant efficacy in ameliorating abnormal motor manifestations in patients with tardive dyskinesia. This therapeutic response underscores the potential of targeting dopaminergic pathways as a viable strategy for alleviating the motor symptoms associated with this disorder. Modulation of

P-ISSN: 2406-9388
E-ISSN: 2580-8303

neurotransmitter release through VMAT2 inhibition presents a promising avenue for the management of TD, emphasizing the importance of restoring balanced neurotransmission within striatal circuitry (Robinson & Patel, 2023; Smith & Lee, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Tardive Dyskinesia (TD) remains a significant concern in patients treated with neuroleptic medications, particularly antipsychotics such as lurasidone Table 1 presents an overview of this case. This condition is characterized by involuntary movements that primarily affect the orofacial region and can result from both antipsychotic and non-antipsychotic drugs. The present case underscores the necessity for vigilant monitoring and timely intervention in at-risk populations, especially given the multifactorial nature of the TD pathophysiology involving dopamine receptor dysregulation and GABAergic signaling. Therapeutically, medications, such as valbenazine, show potential in providing relief by specifically targeting vesicular monoamine transporter 2 (VMAT2), offering a promising strategy for the treatment of this complex condition. Future research should further elucidate the intricate mechanisms underlying TD and optimize the treatment strategies for affected individuals.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to extend their sincere thanks to the patient for allowing publication of this case study.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical approval was not necessary for this case report. The authors provided written informed consent for the publication of this case report. All identifying information was carefully omitted in accordance with patients' wishes.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization, A.N.J.; Methodology, A.N.J., V.R.G.; Software, A.N.J.; Validation, A.N.J., V.R.G.; Formal Analysis, A.N.J.; Investigation, A.N.J.; Resources, A.N.J.; Data Curration; A.N.J.; Writing - Original Draft, A.N.J., V.R.G.; Writing - Review & Editing, A.N.J., V.R.G.; Visualization, A.N.J.; Supervision, A.N.J., V.R.G.; Project Administration, A.N.J.; Funding Acquisition, A.N.J.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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P-ISSN: 2406-9388
E-ISSN: 2580-8303