

THIS WEEK in the JOURNAL

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Bupropion-SR, Sertraline, or Venlafaxine-XR after Failure of SSRIs for Depression

Adult outpatients with a nonpsychotic major depressive disorder received sustained-release bupropion, sertraline, or extended-release venlafaxine after a lack of response to or an inability to tolerate the selective serotonin-reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) citalopram. Approximately one in four patients had a remission of symptoms after switching to another antidepressant. All these medications provided a reasonable second-step choice for depressed outpatients who did not have a remission with or could not tolerate the SSRI.

SEE P. 1231; EDITORIAL, P. 1305; CME, P. 1335

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Medication Augmentation after the Failure of SSRIs for Depression

Although clinicians frequently add a second medication to an ineffective antidepressant, randomized trials comparing augmentation medications are lacking. In this study, adult outpatients with nonpsychotic major depressive disorder who had not had a remission during citalopram therapy were assigned to sustained-release bupropion or buspirone and had similar remission rates on the basis of clinician and self-reports. Several important secondary measures favored citalopram plus bupropion over citalopram plus buspirone.

SEE P. 1243; EDITORIAL, P. 1305

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

ACAT Inhibition and Coronary Atherosclerosis

The enzyme acyl-coenzyme A:cholesterol acyltransferase (ACAT) esterifies cholesterol, and studies in animals suggest that inhibiting ACAT may reduce the progression of atherosclerosis. In this trial, the ACAT inhibitor pactimibe had no beneficial effect on the progression of coronary atherosclerosis and actually worsened some angiographic measures of atherosclerosis. Contrary to expectations, ACAT inhibition may in fact promote atherogenesis.

SEE P. 1253; EDITORIAL, P. 1307

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Genetic Variants and Protection against Coronary Heart Disease

This study demonstrates a strong protective effect of three variants of *PCSK9* against coronary heart disease.

Two of the variants were found predominantly in black subjects, and one variant was found predominantly in white subjects.

SEE P. 1264; EDITORIAL, P. 1310

CLINICAL PRACTICE

Optic Neuritis

A 25-year-old woman presents with a one-week history of blurred vision in the left eye. One day before the onset of visual loss, she noted a dull ache in the left periorbital region and pain on eye movement. Her symptoms progressed for three days but have not worsened since. She has no history of other visual or neurologic symptoms. Examination reveals visual acuity of 20/40 in the left eye, reduced color perception, and a left afferent pupillary defect. There is no visible swelling of the optic disk or pallor of the optic nerve, and a neurologic examination is normal. How should she be evaluated and treated?

SEE P. 1273; CME, P. 1333

MEDICAL PROGRESS

Pregnancy in Women with Solid-Organ Transplants

Pregnancy has become one of the expected benefits afforded to women with successful organ transplants. This article discusses the most recent data about the effects on the mother and child of pregnancy in the recipients of solid-organ transplants.

SEE P. 1281; CME, P. 1334

CASE RECORDS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL

A Woman with Recurrent Right-Upper-Quadrant Pain

A 35-year-old woman had recurrent abdominal pain in the right upper quadrant. Two similar episodes, one year earlier and one month earlier, had led to imaging studies that detected dilated intrahepatic bile ducts with numerous calculi; removal of stones and sphincterotomy led to the relief of symptoms. She had fever, abdominal tenderness, mildly elevated aminotransferase levels, dilated bile ducts with numerous stones, and possible external compression of the left intrahepatic duct.

SEE P. 1295

SOUNDING BOARD

Ethical Considerations Related to Pregnancy in Transplant Recipients

In deciding whether to pursue pregnancy, transplant recipients need to know what they can expect for their own health and for that of their potential children. This article considers how physicians can ethically address fertility issues with female transplant recipients.

SEE P. 1313