Comparative effectiveness of continuation and maintenance treatments for persistent depressive disorder: A Systematic Review

Original title / Originaltitel
Effektivität von Erhaltungstherapien und Rezidivprophylaxe bei persistierender Depression. Studienprotokoll für ein systematisches Review.

Summary / Zusammenfassung
Aim
Chronic forms of depression that last for two years or longer represent a substantial part of depressive disorders and are associated with severe consequences. Growing evidence indicates that persistent depressive disorder (PDD) responds well to several acute interventions such as combined psychotherapeutic and pharmacological treatments. Given the high rates of relapse and recurrence of depression following response to acute treatment, long-term continuation and maintenance therapy are of great importance. Yet, a systematic review comparing the effectiveness of multiple long-term treatments is still missing. Aim of this project is to summarize empirical evidence on the effectiveness of long-term treatments for PDD by means of a systematic review. The primary objectives are to examine, which pharmacological and psychotherapeutic interventions are effective; to examine, if any differences in effectiveness between active treatment options exist; and to find possible treatment effect modifiers.

Methods
Psychotherapeutic and pharmacological interventions alone or in combination are considered as experimental interventions, and no treatment, wait-list, psychological/pharmacological placebo, treatment as usual, and other active treatments are seen as comparators. The population of patients includes adults with PDD. The primary efficacy outcome will be relapse or recurrence rate of depression. The primary safety outcome will be dropping out of the study due to any reason. Randomized controlled trials and controlled clinical trials will be considered. Within the meta-analysis, special attention will be given to emerging challenges (e.g. heterogeneity).

Discussion
Findings are likely to provide crucial information that may help clinicians to choose the appropriate long-term treatment for persistently depressed patients.


Keywords / Suchbegriffe
meta-analysis, effectiveness, persistent depressive disorder, continuation, maintenance, psychotherapy, pharmacotherapy, combination treatment, relapse, recurrence

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