



November is epilepsy awareness month and it has been wonderful seeing, hearing, reading, and being a part of what those who are touched by epilepsy are doing to educate others and how it affects families on a daily basis. We encourage you to our website to read about upcoming events and news from the Resource Center. If you have not already connected with us on Facebook, please do so! Send a friend request to “Matty Fund”, Like our non-profit page “The Matty Fund”, and join the “Discovering My Epilepsy Support Group,” and as always please feel free to contact the Resource Center if we can be of assistance! ... **Deb Siravo**

Does the effectiveness of Anti-Epileptic Drugs in Adults predict effectiveness in kids?

In the 9/5/12 journal *Neurology* published ahead of print, Doctors from the Virginia Commonwealth University, Department of Epidemiology and Neurology, presented an important analysis on a common clinical issue that affects children throughout the world. As it is well known that clinical trials are performed daily and the results are important for obtaining appropriate approvals for the use of new drugs in clinical practice. However, most clinical drug trials tend to exclude children and in fact, children are treated somewhat differently in that special trials have to be done specifically for this population. This often means that drugs and other therapies that are easily available for adults often take several years before they are officially approved for use in children.

The Details...The researchers looked at a combination of previously published studies in order to form new conclusions in assessing how well antiepileptic drug trials that are performed in adults predict the effectiveness of that same drug in children. The investigators searched all medical literature from 1970 to Jan 2012 for clinical trials that addressed partial onset seizures and primary generalized tonic-clonic seizures in adults and in children. Independent epidemiologists used standardized search and study evaluation criteria to pick the trials that would meet the criteria for inclusion in this analysis.

The Results...The investigators found that among 30 trials in adults and children age two and older, the effectiveness measures were consistent between adults and children for gabapentin, lamotrigine, levetiracetam, oxcarbazepine and topiramate. Placebo controlled median percent seizure reduction between baseline and treatment groups were significant in 40 out of 46 groups, and 6 out of 6 of the treatment group studies. Responder rates (patients who have a 50% decrease in seizures) ranged from 2-43% in adults and from 3-26% in children and was significant for 37 out of 43 and 5 out of 8 treatment groups. The authors concluded that the results of seizure trials performed in adults can be extrapolated to predict the effectiveness of those therapies in children.

Why is this important? This study is an important one because as regulatory issues have increased precluding rapid implementation of therapies for both adults and children, children seem to be suffering the larger brunt of this particular problem.

This study suggests that in many cases, what happens in adults will be very much predictive of the experience in children. Despite this correlation, issues with regards to safety, development and school performance are specific to the pediatric population, and need to be addressed. Certainly in pediatric patients who are having difficulty with management of their seizures and are not responding to current therapy, the use of agents that are already approved for adults but are not approved in children seems to be a logical next step based on most of the work that has been done looking at recently approved seizure drugs.

by Joseph I. Sirven, MD, Editor-in-Chief •epilepsy.com •Last Reviewed: 10/24/2012



Discovering My Epilepsy® Family Support Group

Upcoming meetings:

Tues. 11/20 in Warwick

Wed. 12/5 in Wakefield

Tues. 12/18 in Warwick

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REMINDER: The Matty Fund is hosting an Epilepsy Medications workshop on Thursday, November 29th from 6-8 p.m. at our Resource Center in Wakefield. For parents and caregivers of children diagnosed with epilepsy, and young adults with epilepsy. There will be a presentation on commonly prescribed anti-convulsants and a Q&A with Hospital Pharmacist Deb Cote, MS PharmD & mom of a child diagnosed with epilepsy and Clinical Associate Professor Brett Feret, PharmD from the URI College of Pharmacy. This is a free event. Please let us know if you would like to attend by calling 401-789-7330 or email: Jessie@MattyFund.org

