

Effect of galantamine on attention in patients with Alzheimer's disease measured by attention questionnaire scale (AQS) and correlation between the improvement and caregiver's burden reduction

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Attention deficits are frequently already present in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease (AD) when testing of memory functions shows little or no deficits. These AD patients in early stages are often described by caregivers as being unable to concentrate and being easily distractible. Previous clinical studies suggest that the attention impairments may be early feature of AD, responsible for part of troubles with activities of daily living and increasing caregiver's burden.

Therefore, the efficacy of an Alzheimer's drug for attention impairment has been focused on. According to initial studies of galantamine's mode of action, it is considered that galantamine might improve attention in patient with AD with its positive allosteric modulation on cholinergic nicotinic receptors. This study was conducted to demonstrate that the effects of galantamine on attention have influence on caregiver's burden.

We evaluated patient's attention and caregiver's burden using the Attention Questionnaire Scale (AQS) and Burden Interview (BI) respectively at baseline and after galantamine administration for 16 weeks.

After administering galantamine to 1,393 enrolled patients for 16 weeks, AQS score increased from 14.85 ± 5.66 at baseline to 16.03 ± 5.81 at final evaluation ($p < 0.0001$), and BI score decreased from 36.63 ± 17.62 at baseline to 35.13 ± 17.10 at final evaluation ($p < 0.0001$).

The increase in AQS score had a statistically significant correlation with the decrease in BI score ($R = -0.34066$, $p < 0.0001$), suggesting that attention improvements influence caregiver's burden reduction.

In conclusion, treatment with galantamine for 16 weeks in patients with AD produced improvement in their attention with AQS score increase, suggesting reduction in caregiver's burden.

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