The impact of benzodiazepines on occurrence of pneumonia and mortality from pneumonia: a nested case-control and survival analysis in a population-based cohort

The use of benzodiazepines is not associated with community-acquired pneumonia

We read with interest the recent study done by Obiora et al about the incidence and
mortality with pneumonia for benzodiazepine users versus non-benzodiazepine users. We were interested to see whether these results would be generalisable to the Taiwanese population, therefore, we used the National Health Insurance Database of 22 million (2002) population in order to investigate the association of benzodiazepines and community-acquired pneumonia (CAP). We selected window size of 1, 2 and 3 months to compute odds ratios of the pneumonia for benzodiazepine users. There was no association found for benzodiazepines. Our result supports Dublin and Trifirò, which are contradictory to the Obiora et al study, that there is no significant relationship found between using benzodiazepines and having incidence risk for pneumonia.

We believe that our findings would contribute to the discussion on this topic. It is important, however, to emphasise the need for randomised controlled trials for benzodiazepines use and incidence of CAP in patients to demonstrate any causal relationship in terms of morbidity and mortality of having pneumonia while using benzodiazepines.

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