

Hypoglycemic Coma in Elderly Patients with Diabetes mellitus

Authors : D. Furuya, H. Ryujin, S. Takahira, Y. Sekine, Y. Oya, K. Sonoda, H. Ogawa, Y. Nomura, R. Maruyama, H. Kim, T. Kudo, A. Nakano, T. Saruta, S. Sugita, M. Nemoto, N. Tanahashi

Abstract : Purpose: To study the clinical characteristics of hypoglycemic coma in adult patients with type 1 or type 2 diabetes mellitus (DM). Methods: Participants in this retrospective study comprised 91 patients (54 men, 37 women; mean age \pm standard deviation, 71.5 ± 12.6 years; range, 42-97 years) brought to our emergency department by ambulance with disturbance of consciousness in the 7 years from April 2007 to March 2014. Patients with hypoglycemia caused by alcoholic ketoacidosis, nutrition disorder, malignancies and psychological disorder were excluded. Results: Patients with type 1 (8 of 91) or type 2 DM (83 of 91) were analyzed. Mean blood sugar level was 31.6 ± 10.4 in all patients. A sulfonylurea (SU) was more commonly used in elderly (>75 years old; $n=44$)(70.5%) than in younger patients (36.2%, $p < 0.05$). Cases showing prolonged unconsciousness (range, 1 hour to 21 days; $n=30$) included many ($p < 0.05$) patients with dementia (13.3%; 0.5% without dementia) and fewer ($p < 0.05$) patients with type 1 DM (0%; 13.1% in type 2 DM). Specialists for DM ($n=33$) used SU less often (24.2%) than general physicians (69.0%, $p < 0.05$). Conclusion: In cases of hypoglycemic coma, SU was frequently used in elderly patients with DM.

Keywords : hypoglycemic coma, Diabetes mellitus, unconsciousness, elderly patients

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