

More hospital days seen with antipsychotic use in Alzheimer disease

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(HealthDay)—Alzheimer disease patients who initiate treatment with

antipsychotic medications spend more days hospitalized than those who do not initiate antipsychotics, according to a study recently published in the *Journal of Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine*.

Marjaana Koponen, Ph.D., of the Kuopio Research Center of Geriatric Care at the University of Eastern Finland, and colleagues used a nationwide exposure-matched cohort to identify 70,718 Finnish patients diagnosed with Alzheimer disease between 2005 and 2011. Patients who were started on [antipsychotic medication](#) were followed for two years.

The researchers found that patients who were started on antipsychotics accumulated 53 percent more hospital days than patients not using antipsychotics: an average of 52.5 days for [antipsychotic](#) initiators and 34.7 days for Alzheimer disease patients not being treated with antipsychotics. Compared with patients not on antipsychotic medications, patients in the antipsychotic treatment group were hospitalized under the diagnosis codes of several different conditions, including dementia; mental and behavioral disorders; [circulatory system](#), respiratory, or genitourinary diseases; and certain infectious and parasitic diseases.

"Antipsychotic initiators accumulated more hospital days than noninitiators, especially within the first six months after initiation. This may indicate adverse events or difficulties in treating the most severe behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia and [health problems](#) triggering them," the authors write. "After initiating antipsychotics, careful and regular monitoring is needed to assess response and decrease the risk of adverse effects and events."

Several authors disclosed financial ties to Eli Lilly, Janssen-Cilag, Lundbeck, and Otsuka.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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