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How to link theory and practice – safe medication use of warfarin patients

Aim and tasks

The use of warfarin and related complaints in polypharmacotherapy patients is widespread. The aim of this study was to identify frequency and content of warfarin interactions by means of different drug interaction databases and to link this information with actual patients' complaints.

Design of the research

For identification of warfarin interactions with other medicines, the following databases were used: Drugs.com, Inxbase, Epocrates and Stockley. Identified potential drug interactions were linked with warfarin related increased bleeding risk complaints reported by the patients (n=77) who were enrolled in primary care setting.

Results

On average, the patients used 6.3 ± 2.9 medicines per patient and 90% of consumed medicines were interacting with warfarin. The databases identified mean 1.5 warfarin interactions per patient. Of patients 52% reported up to 6 different complaints being not always related to potential major interactions.

Conclusions

The number of all potential drug interactions was higher than number of complaints. However, the type of interaction did not always correlate with occurrence or severity of experienced complaints. This could be related with poorly monitored treatment resulting with adverse drug reaction of warfarin. It is important to monitor patient's condition and adapt warfarin treatment accordingly.