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013

NEW THERAPEUTICAL SYSTEMS FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS: PATIENT PERCEPTION AND CHALLENGES

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Introduction: Multiple Sclerosis is a chronic, progressive, autoimmune disease characterized for damage of myelin and axons. This disorder has a considerable social and economic impact. The prevalence of Multiple Sclerosis in Portugal is estimated to be approximately 50/100,000 inhabitants, according to the Portuguese Multiple Sclerosis Society. In order to minimize the problems created by this disease some treatments are being used, although the ideal treatment has not been yet developed.

Objective: The aims of this study were to ascertain the most widely used treatment for the different types of Multiple Sclerosis and to identify the most relevant parameters that may influence treatment adherence.

Methods: From September to December 2013, data of 60 patients from Portuguese Multiple Sclerosis Society were collected by an online questionnaire. Demographic, disease and therapy related data were collected and statistically analyzed.

Results: About 55% of respondents had Relapsing-Remitting Multiple Sclerosis. Interferon β was the drug most used in the treatment of all types of multiple sclerosis in monotherapy (56,7%) or in combination with other drugs (5%). 58,3% of patients mention appeal to nonpharmacological therapies such as adapted food and nutrition and physiotherapy. Difficulties related to intravenous drug administration was the most relevant factor identified by patients (50%).

Conclusions: The convenience of drug administration is a factor to take in account for the developing of new therapeutic systems due to its role in treatment adherence. Biotechnology and its tools should have an important role in the improvement/refinement of therapy in the near future.

Descriptors: Multiple Sclerosis; Survey; Treatment; Adherence; Challenges.

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