SAND abstract No. 167 from the BEACH program 2010–11

Subject: Management of gout in general practice patients

Organisation supporting this study: Novartis Pharmaceuticals Australia Pty Ltd

Issues: The proportion of general practice patients treated for gout; number of gout episodes experienced in the previous 12 months; care sought by patients for gout; managements used for gout; contraindications in gout management.

Sample: 2,800 patients from 95 GPs; data collection period: 08/06/2010 – 12/07/2010


Summary of results

The age and sex distribution of the 2,800 respondents did not differ from that of patients at all 2009–10 BEACH encounters, with the majority (57.8%) being female.

Of the 2,800 respondents, 145 (5.2%, 95% CI: 4.0–6.4) had at some time been treated for gout. After adjustment for attendance rates by age and sex of patient, we estimated that 3.5% (95% CI: 2.5–4.4) of patients who attended the GP once that year had at some time been treated for gout. Treatment had most commonly occurred for older patients, with one in ten patients in the 65–74 years and 75+ age groups (10.9% and 11.4% respectively) having been treated for gout at some time. The sex-specific rate of gout treatment among male patients (9.0%, 95% CI: 6.8–11.3) was significantly higher than among females (2.4%, 95% CI: 1.4–3.3).

Of 136 respondents (of the 145 who had at some time been treated for gout), 39 (28.7%, 95% CI: 19.5–37.8) had had an episode of gout in the previous 12 months: 19 patients had had one episode and 12 had had two episodes. Of 131 respondents (multiple responses allowed), 34 (26.0%) had used a health service in the previous 12 months for gout management: 33 (25.2%) had visited a GP, one patient (0.8%) had visited a specialist, two patients (1.5%) had required a hospital visit and two visited an emergency department. There were 97 patients (74.1%) who had not used a health service for gout management in the previous 12 months.

Of the 39 patients who had had at least one episode of gout in the previous 12 months, 27 (69.2%) had used a health service: 26 (66.7%) had visited a GP to have their gout managed, one patient (2.6%) had visited a specialist, two patients (5.1%) had required a hospital visit and two patients visited an emergency department for their gout. There were 12 patients (30.8%) who had an episode of gout in the previous 12 months but not used a health service.

Of the 145 patients at some time treated for gout, management information was available for 128. Of these, 104 (81.3%) had received treatment for their most recent episode, and 24 patients (18.8%) had sought no treatment. Ninety-three patients (72.7%) had used medication to treat their most recent episode of gout, and 113 medications were recorded for these patients. Colchicine accounted for 32.7% and allopurinol for 28.3% of medications. The most common other treatment used for the episode of gout was lifestyle modification (39.1%).

GPs were asked to record whether the patient was unable to take specified medications for gout. Suitability of specified medications for gout was recorded for 159 patients, but the response rate varied for each medication. Contraindication or intolerance was indicated for: allopurinol for 9.4%; colchicine 10.1%; oral or systemic corticosteroids for 11.5%; and NSAIDS for 55.7% of cases.

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Please read carefully
The shaded section of the following forms asks questions about **Management of Gout**.
You may tear out this page as a guide to completing the following section of forms.

**Instructions**
Please answer the following questions for **all** of the next 30 patients
in the order in which the patients are seen.
Please **do not** select patients to suit the topic being investigated.

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**Gout**
Please indicate whether this patient has ever been treated for gout by you or any health professional.
If ‘no’ please end questions here for this patient.

**Acute episodes**
Please ask the patient approximately how many acute episodes of gout they have experienced in the past 12 months.

**Type of care sought**
Please use the tick boxes to indicate whether in the **past 12 months** management of gout has involved a GP visit, specialist visit, hospital admission, and/or an emergency department visit.
Tick as many as apply.

**Treatment of gout**
Please indicate how the most recent episode of gout was managed:

**Medication**
Please write the name, form and regimen (dose and frequency) of the medication(s) used to treat gout.
Please specify the duration (i.e., the number of days) that each medication was taken for management of the most recent gout episode.

**Other treatment**
Use the tick boxes to advise whether any other treatments were used for management of the most recent gout episode.

**No treatment**
If no treatment was used please tick the box labelled ‘no treatment used’.

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**Unsuitable medications**
Please use the tick boxes to advise whether the patient is unable to take any of the specified medications for the treatment of gout because the medication is contraindicated, they are intolerant of or unresponsive to the medication.

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**Has this patient ever been treated for gout?**
- **Yes**
- **No → End questions**
- **Don’t know**

**How many acute episodes of gout in the past 12 months?**
- **(please specify)**
- **None**
- **Don’t know**

**In the past 12 mths has gout required:**
- **GP visit**
- **Specialist visit**
- **Hospital admission**
- **Emergency Dept visit**
- **None of the above**

**How was the most recent episode of gout managed?**
- **No treatment used**

**Medication:**
- **Name & Form**
- **Strength**
- **Dose**
- **Frequency**
- **Duration of med use**
  - **(please specify no. days)**

**Other treatment:**
- **Lifestyle modification**
- **Referral to specialist**
- **Referral to allied health professional**
- **Other:**

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**Are any of the medications below unsuitable for use in this patient?**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medication</th>
<th>Contraindicated</th>
<th>Intolerant</th>
<th>Unresponsive</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allopurinol</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSAID</td>
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<td>Colchicine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corticosteroid injection</td>
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