

SAND abstract No. 60 from the BEACH program 2003–04

Subject: Prevalence of GORD and associated proton pump inhibitor use

Organisation supporting this study: AstraZeneca Australia

Issues: The prevalence of gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD) in patients attending general practice; severity of GORD in these patients; the proportion of patients with GORD being treated with proton pump inhibitors (PPIs); treatment of GORD using PPIs, including medications utilised, duration of use, and effectiveness of the medication.

Sample: 2,538 respondents from 88 GPs; data collection period: 15/7/2003–18/8/2003.

Method: Detailed in the paper entitled 'SAND Method 2003–04' on this website:
<http://www.fmrc.org.au/publications/SAND_abstracts.htm>.

Summary of results

The age-sex distribution of respondents was similar to the distribution of the total BEACH sample with the majority of patients (60.7%) being female. Patients aged between 25 and 44 years accounted for 26.7% of the sample, and 25.5% of the patients were aged 45–64 years.

GORD was reported in 412 patients (16.2%, 95% CI: 14.1–18.4). Prevalence was higher in patients aged 65–74 years (30.0%) and those aged 75+ (30.2%) than in those aged 45–64 years (19.8%) or 25–44 years (12.6%).

Of the 412 patients with GORD, 241 (59.1%, 95% CI: 52.6–65.5) were currently being treated with PPIs. The GP rated the majority (54.9%) as having 'moderate' GORD when initially diagnosed, while 21.7% of patients had 'mild' GORD, and 23.4% had 'severe' GORD. The severity of GORD was estimated by endoscopy alone for 51.6% of patients, while a doctor's opinion was the only estimation for 42.2% of patients. A combination of endoscopy and doctor's opinion was used in only 6.3% of patients.

Omeprazole (35.7% of patients, 95% CI: 27.5–43.9) was the most common generic PPI medication currently being used to treat GORD, followed by pantoprazole (24.0%) and esomeprazole (19.3%). The majority of patients had been using their current PPI medication between one and six months (40.6%, 95% CI: 31.8–49.3). Over 20% of patients had been using their current PPI for 7–12 months (22.1%, 95% CI: 15.5–28.8).

There were 84 patients who had taken another PPI or other GORD medication prior to their current medication. The majority of these patients had taken ranitidine (40.5%, 95% CI: 29.5–51.5) or omeprazole (16.7%, 95% CI: 8.4–25.0).

Almost 90% of patients reported that their current PPI provided adequate symptom control (88.2%, 95% CI: 83.6–92.8). However, 29.6% of patients (95% CI: 21.8–37.3) reported a recurrence of GORD symptoms while being treated with a PPI. This was most common in patients with severe GORD (48.9%, 95% CI: 34.9–63.0). Only 14.7% of patients were taking other medications for symptom control of GORD in conjunction with PPIs. The most common of these was mylanta (50.0% of other medications).

Correspondence to: Julie O'Halloran, GPSCU