PHARMACOUTILIZATION OF STATINS IN PRIMARY CARE: PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF A CROSS-SECTIONAL ANALYSIS ON A LARGE POPULATION DATABASE

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Purpose. In this study was investigated the pharmacoutilization of statins in terms of percentage of patients reaching cholesterol target, dosages, and cardiovascular risk profiles estimated according to Framingham Heart Prediction Risk Study*. Methods. A cross-sectional analysis was conducted on a cohort of patients listed in the administrative databases of the Local Health Unit of Ravenna (356,000 inhabitants). In 2001, all patients who received a statin prescription, and/or with a recorded plasma total cholesterol (TC) level, and/or with a hospital admission for cardiovascular reasons, and/or with a clinical appraisal based on cardiovascular risk factors, were defined eligible. Pharmacoutilization was assessed on a patient-by-patient basis cross-linking different databases.

Results. Among 66,736 eligible patients, 9,208 with a documented cardiovascular risk profile were analyzed (mean age 57±17 years, 42% male). CHD was reported in 4.6% (n=425) of patients, diabetes in 4.8% (n=441), cardiovascular risk <20% in 31.7% (n=2,920), cardiovascular risk ≥20% in 5.2% (n=480), an isolated hypercholesterolemia in 39.8% (n=3,668) of patients. On the basis of raised TC levels and cardiovascular risk profiles, patients for whom a statin treatment was suggested were 7,233, however treated patients were only 18.6% (n=1,343). A small group of patients (n=271) reached a level of TC below 190 mg/dl (20.2% of all patients treated with statins, p<0.001). In patients with CHD or diatebes exposed to statins, just a few of them reached their TC target (39.7% and 20.0% respectively). Among those who did not reach cholesterol target (n=1,072), 31.7% was at very high cardiovascular risk. In patients with high TC levels (n=5,890), 45.7% did not received any treatment though they had a high cardiovascular risk.

Conclusion. Data showed a remarkable level of undertreatment among patients with cardiovascular risk factors. The majority of patients on a statin were not reaching recommended cholesterol target (79.8%).