

The prevalence of oral anticoagulation in patients with atrial fibrillation in Portugal: Systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies

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Authors

Daniel Caldeira, Márcio Barra, Cláudio David, João Costa, Joaquim J. Ferreira, Fausto J. Pinto

Abstract

Introduction and Objectives

Oral anticoagulation (OAC) is an effective treatment in the prevention of thromboembolic events in patients with atrial fibrillation (AF). The aim of this review was to estimate the prevalence of OAC therapy in patients with AF in Portugal.

Methods

MEDLINE, the Index of Portuguese Medical Journals and SIBUL (the Bibliographic Catalog of the Integrated Library System of the University of Lisbon) were searched for Portuguese observational studies reporting the proportion of anticoagulated patients with AF. The pooled estimated prevalence of anticoagulated patients and respective 95% confidence interval (CI) were determined by means of a meta-analysis.

Results

Seven studies were included for analysis, of which four were conducted in a hospital environment and three in the general community. These studies enrolled a total of 891 patients with AF. The pooled estimated prevalence of anticoagulated patients was 40% (95% CI: 32–48%).

Conclusions

The prevalence of OAC in Portuguese AF patients is low. There is a need to promote change in OAC prescribing habits for AF patients in Portugal, in accordance with international guidelines.

Keywords

Atrial fibrillation, Anticoagulation, Prevalence, Coumarins, Warfarin, Vitamin K antagonists