

SAND abstract No. 34 from the BEACH program 2001–02

Subject: Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD)

Organisation supporting this study: Janssen Cilag Pty Ltd

Issues: Prevalence of gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD) in general practice patients; medications used for treatment of GORD; medication regimen; patient level of satisfaction with medication effectiveness; initiator of prescribed treatment; and changes in medication during the past twelve months.

Sample: 3,018 respondents from 102 GPs; data collection period: 04/12/01–21/01/02

Method: Detailed in the paper entitled 'SAND Method' on this web site (<http://www.fmrc.org.au/beach.htm>).

Summary of results

The age-sex distribution of respondents was similar to the distribution for all BEACH encounters, with the majority (57.1%) of patients being female.

The prevalence of diagnosed GORD in this population was estimated to be 19.9% (n=599, 95% CI: 16.8–22.9). The proportion of patients with GORD who had been diagnosed at the current encounter was 12.5% (n=75), while 87.5% (n=524) had been diagnosed at a previous encounter. The prevalence of GORD increased significantly with age, being far higher in older patients (34.3% of 65+ age group) than in younger patients (3.4% of under 25 age group). There was no significant difference in the rates of GORD between males (20.7%) and females (19.2%).

Of the patients with GORD, 80.0% (n=479) were currently taking medication for its management. The majority of these patients (96.7%) were taking one medication only.

Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) made up 51.1% of the total GORD medications. The most common (generic) medication taken for GORD was omeprazole, which accounted for 34.1% of all GORD medications, followed by ranitidine (28.7%).

Three quarters (75.0%) of those taking GORD medications reported that a daily regimen had been recommended, while 25.0% were taking their GORD medications as required (prn). Over two thirds (69.1%) of GORD medications had been initiated by the GP, while specialists initiated 25.2% of medications. Of the patients taking GORD medication, 18.9% (n=99) had changed their medication over the previous twelve months. The medications previously taken were most commonly ranitidine (50.3%, n=74) and omeprazole (15.0%, n=22). Forty eight per cent of patients were completely satisfied with their GORD medication while 4.2% said they were dissatisfied.

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