Sulbutiamine

First report of mania: case report

A 58-year-old woman developed mania after self-administering sulbutiamine [Arcalion] for fatigue and weariness.

On day 5 of sulbutiamine therapy [dosage not stated], she presented to an emergency psychiatric clinic with a 5-day history of manic symptoms (sudden laughter, unnecessary happiness, reduced need for sleep). She had no history of mania, hypomania or depression; however, she did have a family history of bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. On examination, she had increased thought processes, flight of ideas and audio-perception defects in line with her mood. She also displayed aspects of grandiosity and psychomotor acceleration.

The woman was hospitalised with a diagnosis of acute manic episode. Neurological examination was normal and a toxicology screen was negative. No pathology was detected in cranial contrast CT and cranial MRI. She was treated with lorazepam and her Young Mania Rating Scale score decreased from 28 points on presentation to 8 points 4 days later.

Author comment: The fact that manic signs that had emerged after the patient started using sulbutiamine disappeared rapidly after discontinuing the drug made us consider sulbutiamine as the cause of her mania.

Editorial comment: A search of AdisBase, Medline, Embase and the WHO ADR database did not reveal any previous case reports of mania associated with sulbutiamine.