

**Antipsychotics/propofol/  
suxamethonium chloride**

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**Neuroleptic malignant syndrome and malignant  
hyperthermia: case report**

A 41-year-old woman developed neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS) while receiving clonazepam, lithium and ziprasidone; her fever resolved but she subsequently developed malignant hyperthermia after receiving suxamethonium chloride [succinylcholine chloride] and propofol.

The woman was admitted to hospital with altered mental status, acute respiratory failure and a temperature of 104°F. She was intubated and she received antibacterials. Her medical history included bipolar disorder, and her home medications included clonazepam, lithium and ziprasidone [*details of drug administrations not stated*]. NMS was suspected; her home medications were discontinued on the day of her admission. She received a propofol drip [*dosage not stated*] due to her agitation. Her fever resolved within 2 days of admission and she was slowly weaned off propofol within 3 days. She was extubated on day 4, but due to continuing respiratory failure she was re-intubated. She showed signs of jaw-clenching and one dose of suxamethonium chloride [*dosage and route not stated*] was given for rapid sequence intubation, and propofol was restarted [*details of drug administration not stated*]. Her temperature slowly began to increase at a rate of about 1°F/day, up to 107°F.

Propofol was discontinued and the woman received dantrolene and bromocriptine for possible malignant hyperthermia. She achieved normothermia within 2 days, following the discontinuation of propofol. During the course of her hospitalisation, she developed multi-organ failure. Her prognosis was poor, and her family elected hospice care for her. She died 19 days after her admission.

**Author comment:** "*Neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS) is a life threatening neurologic emergency associated with the use of neuroleptic agents. . . multiple factors were responsible for hyperthermia, including NMS, use of succinylcholine and propofol.*"

George SS, et al. Propofol use in a patient with neuroleptic malignant syndrome inducing hyperthermia. *Journal of General Internal Medicine* 27 (Suppl.): S470, No. 2, Jul 2012 [abstract] - USA

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