Treatments for Petit Mal (Absence) Seizures

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I. Introduction

The Absence Seizure, also known as Petit Mal epilepsy, occurs in 25% of epileptic patients.” (Malamed 21)
“The first description of absence seizures was made by Poupart in 1705 and Tissot in 1770.” (Brigo 1) These seizures typically become much more infrequent as age increases, and it is common for younger patients with absence seizures to outgrow them at some point in their lives. The symptoms of Petit Mal Epilepsy include unresponsiveness, which usually lasts for less than 30 seconds, inability to answer questions, move, or engage another person in a normal social capacity. I chose this topic as my research topic because these seizures are very personal to me. Ever since I have been in 5th grade, I have been diagnosed with Petit Mal seizures, and because of these seizures, I am not currently able to drive, and I am on medication to mediate them.

II. Methods

Petit Mal is a condition that can be treated with various types of medication including Ethosuximide (Zarontin), which I am currently prescribed to take, Valproic Acid, and Lamotrigine. These various medications have minimal side effects, and usually treat absence seizures very well. These seizures are typically detected using a brain scanning device known as an EEG (electroencephalograph), which utilizes electrodes placed on the surface of the skull to pick up electrical signals from the brain.

III. Results

It has been proven that ethosuximide, Valproic Acid, and Lamotrigine is an effective treatment for absent seizures in adolescents over the years. Between six and eighteen months, ethosuximide has a more than a ninety percent chance of freeing patients of seizures. The other two medications aren’t as effective, but still work as well as they are supposed to with the average effectiveness of Valproic Acid being 75% and Lamotrigine being 67%.

IV. Discussion

As I mentioned before, there aren’t many major disadvantages and drawbacks to the primary methods of treating Petit Mal seizures. The only known notable side effects of ethosuximide are an upset stomach, diarrhea, dizziness/headache, and fatigue. All in all, this medication, along with its counterparts, are great bioengineered medications used to treat absence seizures. The results prove its efficacy, and even I have experience with this type of medication, and its effects on my mental state. Since I have been on ethosuximide, the frequency of my seizures has decreased greatly, and I have hope that one day I will be completely seizure free.

REFERENCES